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TC SCEEN

engaging the global children's entertainment industry

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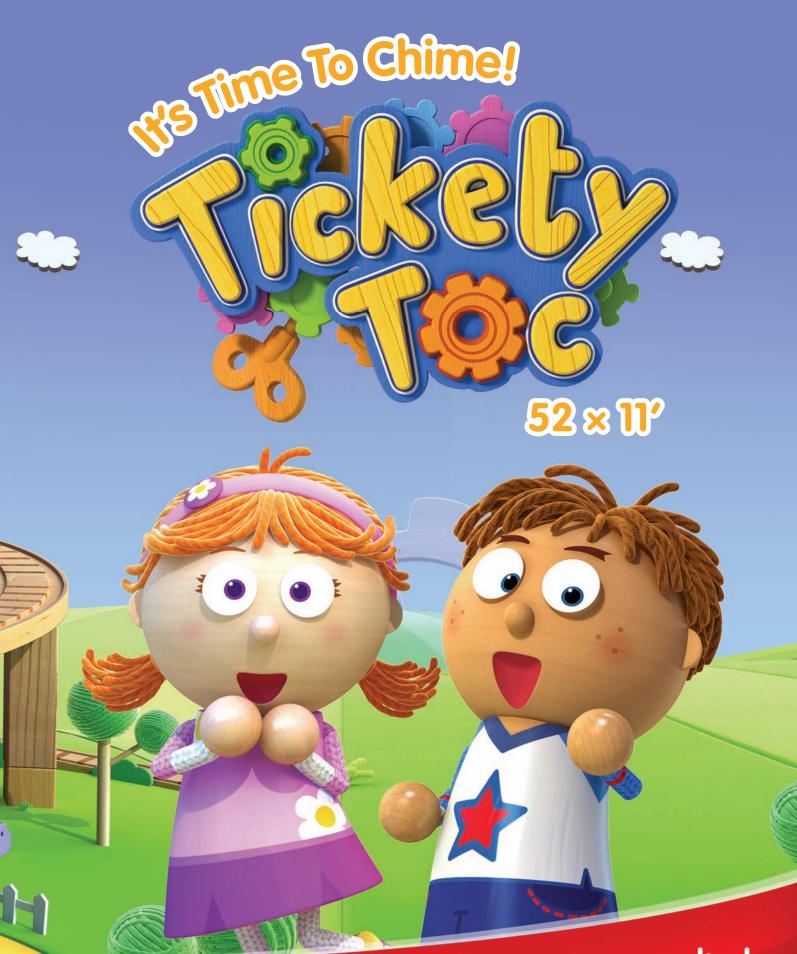
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Cover Our editorial cover features *Driftwood Bay*, a 52 x seven-minute preschool series in development from Sixteen South in Belfast, Northern Ireland. International and event copies sport an ad for new 52 x 11-minute animated series *Bat Pat* from Milan, Italy's Atlantyca Entertainment.

Oops! In "Promo Plans – PBS steps up sponsorship marketing" (page 26, January 2012), we stated "75% of heads of household under the age of 49 watch WGBH-produced Curious George with their children." The statistic actually refers to women ages 18 to 49. Additionally, we stated that PBS is home to the top five "co-viewed series" for kids under three, when it is actually home to the top five series for kids under three overall, not just co-viewed. Kidscreen regrets the errors.



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5 min. x 26 episodes



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ADVERTORIAL

KOREAN ANIMATION LEAPS ONTO THE



Korean animation content boasts cutting-edge designs and original characters, as well as top notch production value. This year at Kidscreen Summit 2012, with support from the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA), twenty major players of the Korean animation industry

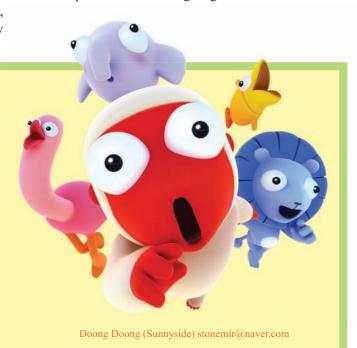
will unveil leading Korean talent and technical expertise within the children's entertainment market.

In the animation industry, countries that produce original content are limited. Some countries may produce animation with lower budgets, while other countries such as France, the UK, and the US produce leading animation based on their long history and expertise. Today, Korea has become well-known for its high-quality animation that meets, and occasionally exceeds, worldwide market standards within reasonable budget ranges.

Until roughly ten years ago, the Korean animation was known for its work-for-hire industry environment. Since then, over the past ten years, Korean animation has built a solid reputation for creating original animation content

Sunnyside's <Doong Doong>, slapstick 3D [CGI] HD animation, tells the stories of a baby gorilla and his friends living in Sunny Land. On the app store, there have been over 2 million downloads. Its popularity in China and the United States is on the rise, resulting in much popularity and global awareness, while positively influencing the character licensing business.







across all aspects of the industry. Today, Korea has grown to become the third largest production power of animation in the global market. The industry has a bright future with continuously growing sales approximated at \$366 million annually.

Korea offers high-quality development and production for both television and feature films with competitive prices. Its skills in the area of animation, in particular pre-school programming, are globally recognized. In addition, Korea is eagerly embracing stereoscopic 3D and CGI and is even preparing to actively involve itself in 4D technology.

The current, greatest challenge for Korea's animation industry is to develop content suited to new media businesses, including smart TV and mobile applications. Convergence of technologies has made it possible for the Korean government to conduct more streamlined business operations and respond to new media platforms and new media services. As such, there is a strong need for new platform players to focus more on creative content.





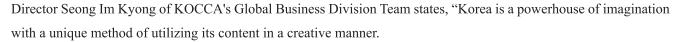
<Little Train Choo Choo> is a yellow shuttle train that drives around Toyville with his three close friends, Miles, Jackie and B-Bot. They come across various problems and situations that occur in everyday life. <Little Train Choo Choo> combines unique and beautiful art as well as advanced 3D technology. The concept is being used not only as an animation series for TV but also other platforms, including publication, as apps for smart phones and smart TV.

ADVERTORIAL

In addition, the Korean government has shown that it is strongly committed to supporting overseas market expansion through showcases, screenings, and competitions. Recently, Korean animation has been strengthening its global competitiveness through business diversification such as overseas investment, co-production projects, and connecting with additional genres. All of these factors are being combined to underscore the Korean animation industry's ambition to become, and remain, a global standard.

FunnyFlux's <Tickety Toc> broke new ground when it was picked up for worldwide distribution by Zodiak Rights and promptly sold to Nickelodeon while still in its pre-production stage. It is the first Korean animation to be aired on Nickelodeon channels throughout the world.

Tickety Toc (FunnyFlux Entertainment) jungjin_hong@funnyflux.kr



Korean companies are thinking globally and producers are fully willing to experiment with new, cutting-edge technologies. The animation industry is one of the strongest forces of Korea's creative industries. In regards to its global success, however, the industry still has its work cut out for itself. We believe that it is fundamentally important to have a vision that embraces the steady development, and production of, content that has the most potential for global success."





ASIA ANIMATION FORUM 2012

July 17~18, 2012 Coex in Seoul, Korea www.asiaanimation.org

Asia Animation Forum, a stepping stone for the domestic animation industry to enter overseas markets



The objective of the Asia Animation Forum (AAF) is to increase awareness and understanding of Asia's burgeoning animation industry through various program sessions and information exchange. AAF also supports Korea's animation industry in expanding overseas and attracting foreign investment, while promoting cooperation between Asian animation industries.



Asia Animation Forum 2012 (AAF 2012) provides a venue for domestic and international animation experts to discuss the joint development of global animation projects. AAF 2012 is scheduled to be held in July, 2012 at COEX, in Seoul, Korea.



Participants at AAF 2012 will largely consist of experts who will discuss the development of Asia's animation industry and suggest its vision for the future. This will be done via various programs such as 'Project Pitching' that invite the world's most well-known animation channel representatives, investors, and overseas distributors. During AAF 2012, opportunities will be given for participants to present animation projects, while engaging in one-on-one biz-matching sessions to reach global deals.



The Asia Animation Forum 2012 will provide the venue for all to discover more about Asian animation and its endless possibilities in the global market.

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Editorial

What came first...

Those of you who know me are aware that I'm not what you'd call a girly-girl. I avoid pink clothing like the plague, don't watch The Bachelor or Say Yes to the Dress, or any of those shows that so often reek of desperation on the part of the women involved and continue to encourage and cultivate the stereotypes on which the Wedding Industrial Complex feeds. On occasion, however, I will allow myself to acquire something feminine and eye-catching. (Like a cat, or my seven-year-old niece, I admit that I am drawn to pretty, sparkly objects.) Today, for example, I just happened to pick up a bunch of hot pink and red heart-shaped glitter stickers from a co-worker that are now proudly affixed to my cubicle wall.



So why am I relating my tales from the Sisterhood of the Shiny Things to you? If you turn to page 74, you'll find a great article called "Building an audience," which details Lego's attempt to create a girls-specific line of construction toys—a first for the toyco and the industry, I believe. On the surface, the line sounds like great news, but it has incited a lot of criticism from consumer groups and activists that are arguing Lego Friends marks a giant step backwards for girls' and women's equality.

The resulting playsets and newly designed mini-figures are indeed firmly grounded in the realm of the stereotypically feminine (think cafés, shops, kitchens) and rendered in vibrant colors, with those old standbys, pink and purple, getting starring roles. And as a feminist, I admit to having

mixed feelings about Lego Friends at first glance. But then the part of my brain that gravitates to the decidedly girly nature of sparkling objects said, "Hold on a minute. You don't know why you like these things, you just do-it's somehow innate." So I would argue that the four years worth of research Lego conducted, in which it interviewed thousands of girls and their mothers, likely could not have yielded an alternative outcome when it came to product design.

You see, Lego gave girls what they requested—more detailed playset interiors, more opportunities for character-based storytelling, the removal of weapons-driven narrative typically favored by boys, and, of course, brighter colors. I bet those girls, if asked, could not say why they wanted those things, they just knew they did. So what came first, the sparkle or the girly-girl? Certainly, gendered preferences are reinforced by the abundance of pink domesticity-based playthings available in the toy aisle. But as to where the yearning for these things comes from in girls, it can't all be chalked up to environment (so speaks the sparkle queen, here). At the very least, Lego Friends has a better chance of attracting the roughly 91% of girls who don't engage in construction play and miss out on its benefits (namely the development of spatial, mathematical and fine motor skills) than its traditional counterpart. Now that's something to build on.

Cheers, Lana



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Are you a licensing agent looking to grow your portfolio of top-tier kids entertainment brands? This is your chance to make a big impression with their owners.

Avidly read by more than 12,000 leading executives worldwide, *Kidscreen* is quite simply the kids entertainment industry's most trusted source of business information. And in our **Licensing Show issue**, we're planning to shine our influential spotlight on the world's best licensing agencies in an **Agents of Profit** sponsored supplement.

Companies that book into **Agents of Profit** will be profiled as part of a sponsored feature article about the importance of working with experienced licensing agents. The piece will run in the May/June issue of *Kidscreen* that goes to Licensing Show, helping you stay high on the radar of leading brand owners as they set up their properties for growth in 2012/2013.

DEADLINES:

Booking	May 2
Interviews completed	May 7
Ads due	May 9
iMag and issue street date	May 25

Contact the Kidscreen Sales team today (sales@kidscreen.com or 416-408-2300) for more info about this unique marketing opportunity!

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The SOPA effect

Chalk one up for web-based activism. On January 18, approximately 13 million people participated in an online protest that saw 50,000 websites go dark during the day. An estimated three million emails were sent to US Congress during the protest by opponents of proposed anti-piracy Bills SOPA (Stop Online Piracy Act) and PIPA (Protect IP Act). The legislation, if enacted, would allow the US government to censor roque websites, block access and funding, and reduce piracy of movies, TV shows and other professionally produced content. But the massive protest helped persuade US Congress to delay action and re-evaluate its next move. It was bad news for supporters of the legislation, including big Hollywood film studios, TV networks, cable companies and the chairman and CEO of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), former Senator Chris Dodd. (He certainly didn't help his case by making public comments that led to the creation of a petition that asked the White House to investigate Dodd for acts of bribery.) The debate is far from over, but the impact of the protest reminds us how increasingly important content rights, security and ownership have become to the entertainment business in the digital age.

CENSORED



CENSORED

Appisodes? Like totally!

Original content for kids is evolving fast and and tween/ teen-targeted Totally Amp'd, the first original mobile app-cum-TV series from Shaftesbury Films and its digital media division Smokebomb Entertainment, is breaking new ground. Published by developer XMG Studio, the 10 "appisode" series combines live-action scripted comedy with interactive games, music and design-based activities for iOS devices. Whoa dudes, seriously.



Buffett backs Tesco

Billionaire investor Warren Buffett is at it again. Known for rushing in where angels fear to tread, his latest bet is on embattled grocer Tesco. Buffett's firm just increased its stake in the UK's largest retailer from 3.21% to 5.08%. The deal went public right after Tesco forecast a flat profit for 2012/13, prompting its stock price to plummet by 19%. The question, as always seems to be the case with Buffett, is what does he know that no one else does?



TV-ergence

While rumors are still swirling about when Apple's iTV will materialize, other big-name CE brands like Sony got a leg up on the competition, unveiling new technology at CES that meshes TVs and mobile. Sets with voice and Kinect-like gesture recognition and apps that utilize the TV screen and smart phone or tablet at the same time were a hot trend in Vegas—looks like parents and kids have another toy to fight over.



Setting **up shop**

Disney is opening its first retail stores in China this fall. Through a robust L&M program, House of Mouse products have gained more exposure in the territory in recent years. However, while the the emerging Chinese middle class is attractive to licensing types, it hasn't proved to be an easy sell—just ask toyco Mattel about the six-story luxury Barbie store it shuttered in Shanghai last year.

To keep up with the news as it happens, check out **Kidscreen.com** daily.



After a fabulous decade traveling the world to interview top Hollywood celebrities. **Melina Bellows** found herself helming a kids magazine in desperate need of a makeover. So she took what she knew about entertainment and turned Nat Geo's nature and science content into pages of fun.

Ex-journo brings star quality to kids mags

The gig National Geographic EVP and chief creative officer of books, kids and family, leading the editorial team for *National Geographic Kids* magazine and its sister preschooler pub *National Geographic Little Kids*. Last year Bellows also took on the Nat Geo books division, overseeing all aspects of content development across all publishing product lines, both print and digital.

Mastering magazines After graduating from Boston College, Bellows moved to New York and landed a role as an editorial assistant at the startup movie mag, *Premiere*, where the 22-year-old dealt directly with celebrities, producers and directors to compile movie roundups.

"It was really hairy, you'd have Tom Cruise holding on line one, John Candy on line two and Michelle Pfeiffer on line three," says Bellows, adding that even under that kind of pressure, she felt at home. That experience led to a staff position at *Entertainment Weekly*, writing celebrity profiles on the likes of Keanu Reeves, Sophia Coppola and Wesley Snipes, all while pitching story ideas to mags like *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle* and *Glamour*. Her next step was over to US newsstand heavyweight *Ladies Home Journal*, where Bellows sourced and wrote celebrity cover stories that had her jet-setting to movie sets and festivals around the world to interview A-list stars.

From Divas to Dinosaurs Believe it or not, trying to make the umpteenth cover story on Julia Roberts sound interesting eventually ran its course for Bellows. Looking for a new challenge, she took the editor's seat at the then-flagging kid mag *National Geographic World* in 2000.

"I looked at World magazine and thought, 'this reads like a homework assignment,' so we did a total redo," says Bellows. She sent her staffers to fifth-grade classrooms to see what kids liked and wanted to learn. And borrowing from her experience as an entertainment journalist, she introduced movie stories with an educational twist. "For the SpongeBob movie, we'd do an interview with a marine biologist to reality-check all the things in the toon," says Bellows. For example, they answered the age-old question of whether or not starfish limbs really grow back. (They do!)

Her work in magazines had also taught Bellows how to package editorial. So she did away with pages of running type, introduced fun sidebars and pullouts to give kid readers multiple points of entry, and upped the visual appeal with a photo-driven design. Nat Geo's *Kids* now boasts a circulation of 1.1 million and has nearly 20 international editions.

The digital future Last year, Nat Geo Kids had its most successful year across platforms. *The 2012 Kids Almana*c reached number three on the *New York Times* bestseller list for kids' paperback books, and virtual world Animal Jam tipped one million players in more than 172 countries. The division also launched several new apps, including the *Weird But True* fact finder, and partnered with Microsoft to launch *Kinect Nat Geo TV*, an interactive game based on Nat Geo *WILD* episodes played through Kinect. Next up Bellows is exploring the preschool app market with the launch of three more apps in the coming months that focus on early learning. —Kate Calder

The **BIG** idea Where's your next creative breakthrough coming from?

We've tapped TEDx presenter and leadership expert Simon Sinek to keynote Kidscreen Summit 2012.

Drawing from his book, Start With Why, Sinek will kick off the Summit with an exploration of the golden circle of innovation. Fascinated by leaders and companies that have exerted the most influence on modern history like Steve Jobs and Apple, he has discovered remarkable patterns about how they think, act and communicate—which is the complete opposite of what everyone else does. Sinek's theories, grounded in the biology of human decision-making, reveal why some people, messages and organizations are able to inspire us much more than others. —Kate Calder

Out of **Office**

Tales from the frequent fliers club



Christophe Goldberger

Head of distribution and marketing, Imira Entertainment



1. In my carry-on you'll find *Freedom* by Jonathan Franzen and my iPad.

2. My go-to gadget my noise-reducing headset.

3. On the fly

I have learned to stay cool, whatever happens.

4. Preferred in-air tunes

the dance-punk tunes of LCD Soundsystem.

5. Best in-flight food

An Indian meal on Singapore Airlines.



6. Best power-lunch

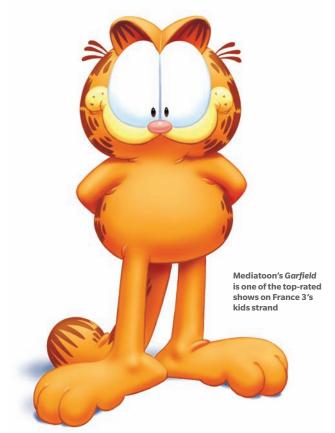
On the terrace of Hukama, dining on fine Chinese cuisine, facing the Burj Khalifa tower in Dubai.

7. Window or aisle?

Window. Zzzzzzzzzzz.



For sales queries, please contact **nathan.waddington@bbc.com** or your BBC Worldwide children's programming representative for more details 26 x 11' HD A Darrall Macqueen production for CBeebies



France Télévisions reorgs its kids group, ups Borde

fter more than four years as head of the kids and youth at France Télévisions, Julien Borde is leaving the department to take on a wider role as general secretary of programs at France 3, where his objective will be to improve ratings and build awareness for the channel that has suffered ratings losses to commercial net M6 in recent months. Borde will be responsible for all program units, including documentaries, games, live entertainment and magazine shows, reporting to Thierry Langlois, head of broadcast and programs at France 3.

Borde has been looking after his new position and his old remit simultaneously since mid-January, but says that he expects his successor as director of kids and youth will be announced in the days leading up to Kidscreen Summit (February 7 to 10). Borde says he'll still touch on the kids programming scene, overseeing shows that are scheduled on France 3. He will also be on-hand at the upcoming editions of Annecy and Cartoon Forum, two major events for France Télévisions.

Borde's promotion at France 3 was part of a major reorganization of the entire kids department, which supplies programming across the pubcaster's network of channels—France 3 (six to 12s), France 5 (preschool) and France 4 (teens and adult animation). Programming executives with new responsibilities include: Claire Heinrich, who has been named acquisitions manager and will be a key contact for distribution and acquisitions; Christine Reinaudo, now overseeing hybrid programs and new formats, which Borde says the channel is looking to strengthen; Pierre Siracus, who steps into the newly created position of research and development manager; Jean-Baptiste Lamotte, the new commissioning manager of animation for six to 12s; and Patricia Adane, who is taking on the role of programming and creative manager. Céline Chesnay, meanwhile, remains in charge of programming serving preschoolers and young children.

The re-org follows the department's goal to develop more innovative original programming, part of which includes working differently with producers during the development phase, namely producing series pilots—a first for the department. -Kate Calder

Onthecircuit

Notes for the industry travel diary

March 5-9

Game Developers Conference San Francisco, California

www.gdconf.com



It's time to get your game face on. The world's largest professional game industry event. The Game Developers Conference (GDC), is returning to San Francisco next month and features more than 400 lectures, panels, tutorials and round-table discussions on a broad number of game development topics led by industry experts. The conference also features the annual Independent Games Festival, which gives developers with unpublished games a chance to gain exposure. Plus the most relevant game development tools, platforms and services will be on display.

March 19-22

Bologna Children's Book Fair/ **Bologna Licensing Trade Fair** Bologna, Italy



www.bolognachildrensbookfair.com

With more than 1,200 exhibitors from 66 countries, the Bologna Children's Book Fair offers the best networking, buying and selling opportunities for anyone associated with the kids publishing industry. Whether you're an up-and-coming author/illustrator scouting the latest trends, or a distributor looking to buy translation rights, this event delivers. As an added bonus, the Bologna Licensing Trade Fair runs simultaneously in the same venue and offers an extensive look at the Italian consumer products market.

April 1-4

MIPTV

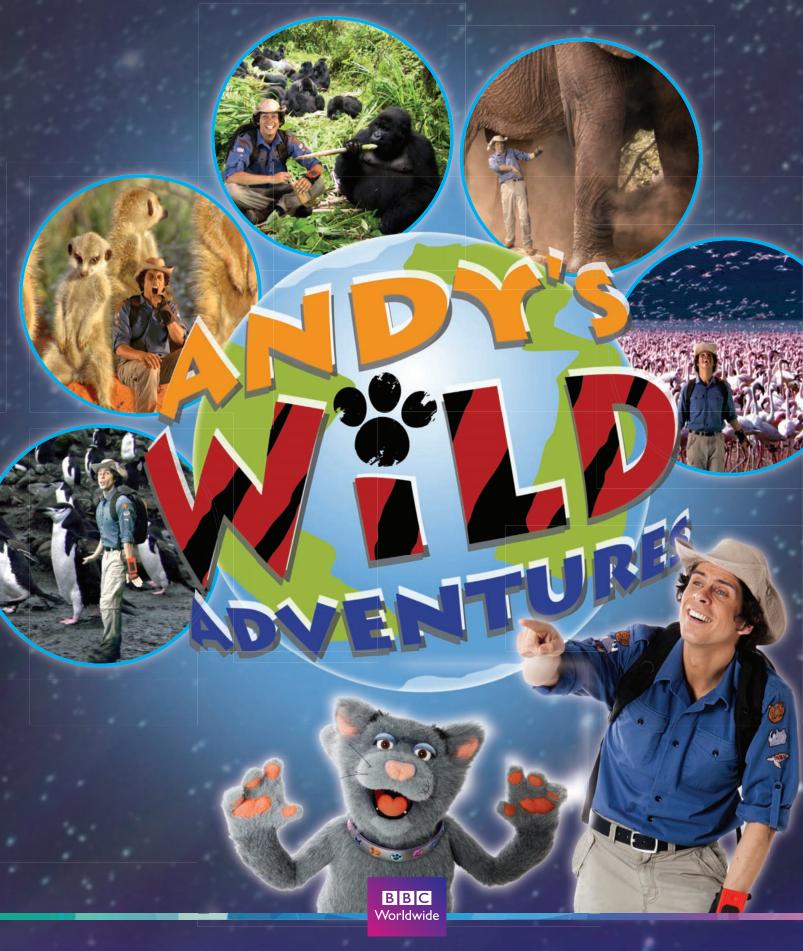
www.mipworld.com/miptv





Who doesn't love springtime in Cannes? For the entertainment industry focused on television, spring means it's time to leverage business opportunities and make new connections at MIPTV, which attracted more than 11,000 participants, 4,000 buyers, and 1,550 exhibitors from 100 countries in 2011. Whether you need a financial model for your co-production opportunity or want to acquire a program across a new platform, MIPTV has you covered. Other features include world premiere television screenings, a branded entertainment showcase and a new kid-focused animation and live-action talent showcase.

A full listing of Industry Events is available at kidscreen.com/events



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HotStuff

An animated life

Rob LaDuca keeps beloved Disney characters alive and brings Peter Pan to primetime



Who Native New Yorker Rob LaDuca's love for animation developed very early in life. As a kid, he would take giant sheets of butcher paper from his family's restaurant and hang them up in his parents' basement and draw cartoons.

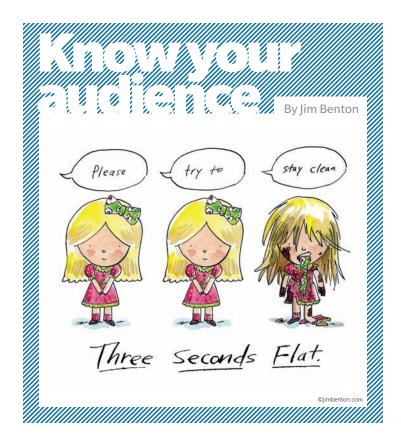
You might recognize LaDuca from his work on popular Disney programs that have provided him with a 20-year career at Walt Disney Television Animation. During his time at Disney, some of his storyboarding credits include *The New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh* and *Duck Tales*.

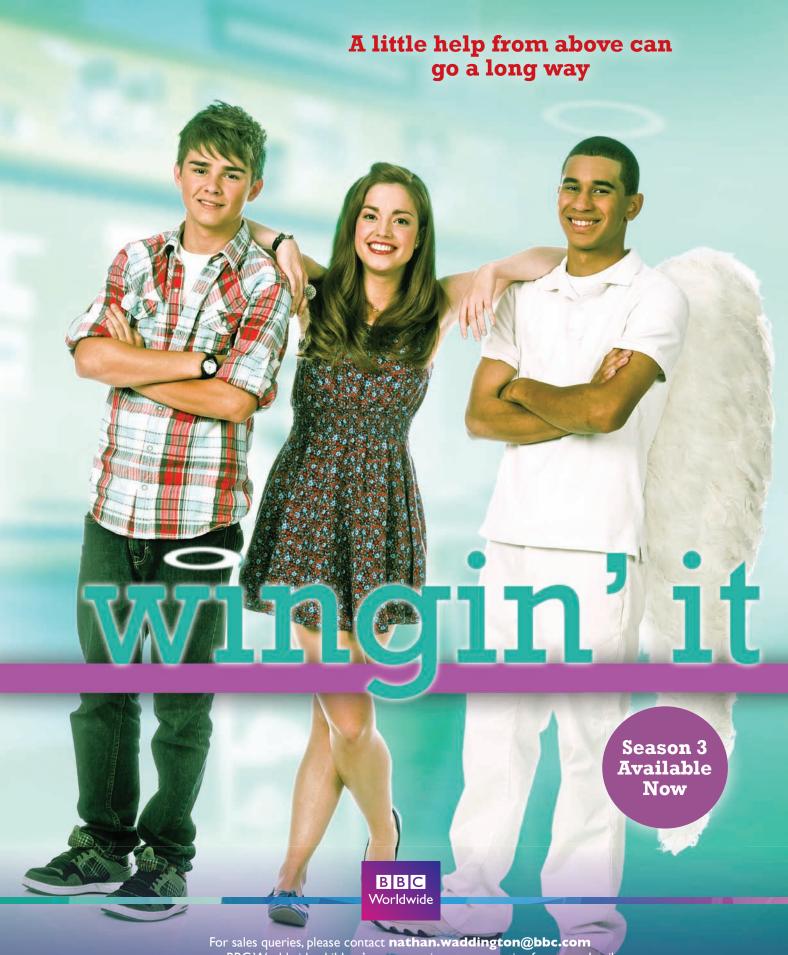
Why take note? Disney Channels Worldwide has earmarked March 23 as the launch date for the much-anticipated 24/7 US preschool net Disney Junior, which began as a daily Disney Channel programming block in February 2010 and has seen its year-to-year ratings increase 26% among kids ages two to five and 36% among boys ages two to five. Now, LaDuca—years and many storyboards later—is at the helm of two of its most popular shows as executive producer of Mickey Mouse Clubhouse and Jake and the Never Land Pirates. Jake, in its second season and Mickey Mouse Clubhouse, now in its sixth year, will both be featured prominently in the channel's lineup. Jake has reached more than 110 million viewers worldwide, airing in 166 countries and in 35 languages through fall 2011, while Mickey Mouse Clubhouse has reached more than 145 million viewers, airing in 168 countries and in 35 languages through the same period.

Behind the scenes LaDuca says the expectation for Disney Junior's new US preschool channel is to provide more great storytelling, music and the type of fun kids associate with Disney programming across multiple platforms. LaDuca says he's been able to have a successful career by remaining in the mindset of a six-year-old. "If you make cartoons, you know what it's like to be the kid—you know what funny sound effects and pieces of music work best." With all of his efforts currently placed on Jake and the Never Land Pirates and Mickey Mouse Clubhouse, LaDuca relies on strong, collaborative team support, not unlike the teamwork theme behind Jake. According to LaDuca, working on a series is like an orchestra piecing a symphony together. "Everyone's ideas are important and they really help each other's ideas become better."

Next up The big news for Jake is the return of Peter Pan, who will make his first-ever appearance in the series on February 13 on Disney Channel. In the 45-minute special Jake and the Never Land Pirates: Peter Pan Returns, kid pirates Jake, Izzy, Cubby and Skully are enlisted by Peter Pan to help find his lost shadow. To generate excitement for the premiere, DisneyJunior.com/PeterPan will debut Shadow Shenanigans, a new online game where players can become Peter Pan's shadow, on February 6. And a full-length preview of the new special will also be available February 6 via Disney Channel on Demand. –Jeremy Dickson







For sales queries, please contact **nathan.waddington@bbc.com** or your BBC Worldwide children's programming representative for more details

Series I-3 (51 x 25') **HD** Produced by Temple Street Productions for the Family Channel

Shaking off the stupor often induced by the holiday season and cold weather, there's been a lot of movement on the exec front across the TV and consumer products sides of the biz. At Nickelodeon, president of animation Brown Johnson has a new SVP of animation for current series in Rich Magallanes [A], who has been promoted from VP. Magallanes' 15 years of experience at Nick will certainly help him as he oversees production on a number of series including Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and SpongeBob SquarePants.

With Toy Fair coming up and consumer products Entertainment's Nelvana Enterprises. Kerr, who will report to Nelvana's MD Colin Bohm, will assume oversight of the management of Nelvana properties including Beyblade, Babar, Franklin and Max & Ruby.

Across the Atlantic at BBC Worldwide, Neil **Ross Russell** left his position as worldwide MD of licensed consumer products & global children's brands to join a new consultancy firm, Oakshore Strategy. During his time at BBCW, Russell helped implement a new children's strategy and create a consumer products division for all brands in the portfolio across all formats including licensed

to grow its portfolio that spans preschool, kids comedy, action/ adventure and tween/ teen genres-promoted **Sander Schwartz from** EVP of the division to president. Bob Higgins slides into Schwartz's old EVP role after serving as SVP. FremantleMedia also welcomed Chapman Maddox as director of development (after stints at Six Points Harness and Cartoon Network), and has named Amy Takahara as manager of distribution and marketing.

Fueling its efforts to expend the licensing program for its successful gaming app Cut the Rope, developer Zeptolab hired

on the mind of Roger McLaughlan as the former MD of ASDA Living (ASDA's general merchandise store group) heads to Toys 'R' Us as MD of its UK operations. McLaughlin will be responsible for marketing, merchandising, store operations and customer service for the UK-based stores.

In broad moves, Turner **Broadcasting System US** restructured its ad sales division, naming two new presidents, **Donna** Speciale and Greg **D'Alba**, to take the reins. Speciale is now president of Turner Entertainment & Animation Ad Sales, while D'Alba is president of News and Turner Digital managing CCI Releasing's international library and executive sales team. Shah previously held posts as co-president of August Productions and director of sales at Alliance Films.

Add Zodiak Kids' Marathon Media to the list of companies looking to expand in Asia. The prodco's picked one of its own, Stéphane Aldebert, to lead the charge as regional director of the company's new Hong Kong office. Aldebert moves up from the director of development and head of production positions he previously held at Marathon. He will be responsible for strengthening Marathon Media's relationships with producers,















top of mind, Nickelodeon also announced a reorganization of its consumer products division, placing an emphasis on global, cross-platform plans for toys and apparel. Nick's strategic business operations are now handling toys, interactive, consumer electronics and soft goods licensing under Sarah Kirshbaum Levy, COO of Nickelodeon Group. In another switch, Nickelodeon's digital team, led by EVP of Digital Steve Youngwood, is now responsible for managing the broadcaster's publishing and home entertainment

Over in the Big Smoke (a.k.a. Toronto, Canada), industry veteran **Andrew** Kerr [B] has been named head of consumer products, the Americas and Australasia at Corus

businesses in the US.

products, DVDs, books and music. BBCW's international director of global brands lan Watson is temporarily overseeing the company's kids brands business until a replacement is appointed.

On the broadcasting side, BBCW made a key promotion in early January, upping **Deirdre Brennan** [C] from director of television to GM and director of channels and branded services for Australasia, where some of her new duties include overseeing the development of the local channel portfolio that encompasses UKTV, UKTV NZ, BBC Knowledge, BBC Knowledge NZ and CBeebies Australia.

In a string of changes, the Kids & Family Entertainment division of FremantleMedia Enterprises—which continues

media professional Tanya Haider to head up licensing and merchandising for the company. Haider held management roles at Nick Consumer Products, looking after programs for SpongeBob SquarePants and Dora the Explorer.

Continuing with merchandising, another Nick exec, Trudi Hayward, has moved from her role as VP of Nickelodeon Consumer Products UK to the newly created position of SVP and global head of merchandise for UK-based prodco ITV Studios Global Entertainment. Reporting to EVP and ex-Nick bigwig Jean-Philippe Randisi, Hayward will draw on her previous merchandising experience on brands such as SpongeBob Square Pants, Dora the Explorer and Star Wars.

Toys will no doubt be

Ad Sales. Speciale leads ad sales for Turner's suite of entertainment, kids and youth networks, including Cartoon Network, Adult Swim and TBS. She will also co-manage Cartoon Network Enterprises, which handles Turner's consumer products, licensing, home video/DVD and retail development business. President and COO of Turner's Animation, Young Adults & Kids Media (AYAKM) division Stuart Snyder and SVP of digital & CNE for **AYAKM Paul Condolora** will also work with Speciale on CNE matters.

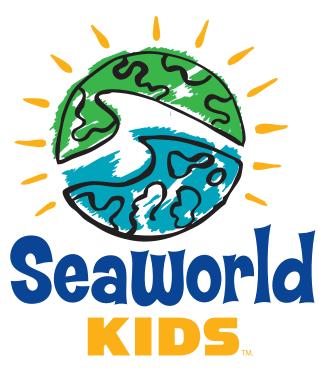
At Toronto, Canadabased prodco CCI Entertainment, Rekha **Shah** [D] enters the fold as VP of distribution and co-production, where she'll be responsible for

animation studios, game developers, publishers, distributors, licensing agents and merchandising companies across the territory.

And in other Zodiak happenings. Nicola Herrmann has taken the new position of head of brand marketing for Zodiak Rights, the international division of Zodiak Media (formerly Zodiak Media Group). Reporting to Jennifer Lawlor, SVP of strategy and planning, consumer products for Zodiak Rights, Herrman's responsibilities will include managing marketing activities for all children's properties in Zodiak Rights' (London) portfolio, as well as supporting licensees, broadcasters, retail and promotional partners.

For more People Moves, head over to **kidscreen.com/category/people-moves**





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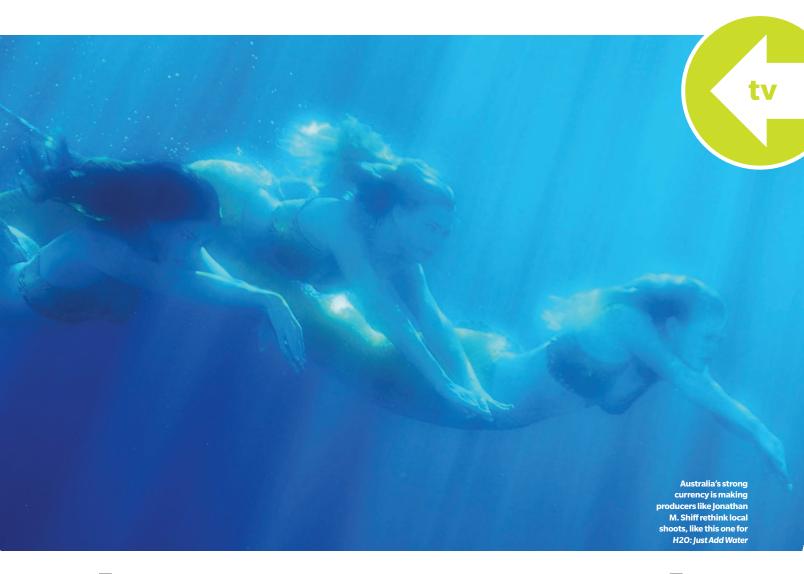












Changes Down Under

Australia will be a territory to watch this year, as the land of strong tax incentives and co-pro treaties anticipates new convergence policies and lobbies for higher rebates

BY KATE CALDER

ess than a day after emailing Australian producer Jonathan Shiff for this story, he calls back at 7:30 a.m. local time—from the jungle. His Sydney-based prodco is on location north of Cairns, Queensland for *Reef Doctors*, a family-targeted action/adventure TV movie set to air on Australia's Network 10. The co-pro with ZDF is the first primetime drama for Shiff, who has carved out a niche over the last 27 years with live-action tween series such as *Ocean Girl*, *The Elephant Princess* and *H2O: Just Add Water*. Shiff is also gearing up on pre-production for an H2O spin-off, *Mako Mermaids*, also being co-produced with ZDF.

Jonathan M. Shiff Productions is one of several Australian kids prodocs that collectively create 20% of the country's annual content output. Australian content requirements, which mandate that children's broadcasters screen at least 96 hours of first-release homegrown children's programming over a three-year period, have helped drive the domestic production industry. As well, the territory's strong subsidies, tax credits and co-production treaties have made Australians attractive international partners.

However, fluctuations in Australian currency have many producers lobbying to increase the producer offset rebate in order to stay competitive in the global market. And an upcoming convergence review that will incorporate emerging digital platforms into regulations for tax incentive schemes has Aussies anticipating how these changes will affect the kids industry.



Offsetting costs

Shiff says his days of shooting series against stunning Australian vistas may be coming to an end. He's worried that the comparatively strong Australian dollar, which at press time was averaging about AUS\$1 to US\$1.05, could have a crippling effect on the local production industry. He's currently scouting Hawaiian and Canadian spots as potential shooting locations in the event that Australia proves too expensive.

And Shiff's one of the more fortunate ones. He has the track record to score presales that garner the minimum license fee of AUS\$100,000 per half hour required to qualify for deficit financing from industry org Screen Australia. But he says an erosion of 40% in financing due to the current exchange rates has lowered the margins on live-action productions. So Shiff, along with several other kids producers, is crossing his fingers in the hopes that SA's producer offset is bumped up from 20% to 40%. Increasing the rebate, which is a paid out for a percentage of qualifying Australian spend on TV production, would give indie prodcos a needed financial boost, helping to further attract co-pro partners and keep production Down Under.

Getting Aussie air time

Inking an official co-pro deal requires getting an Australian broadcaster on-board at the outset. In the country's competitive landscape, it's easier said than done, especially for nascent indie producers. Last fall, Richmond-based 1440 Productions came home from Cannes with the MIP Junior Kids Jury award for its 26 x half-hour westernmeets-sci-fi series *Dig Deep Creek*. But while interest from potential partners for the live-actioner has been high, MD Kristy Fuller says the project hasn't yet secured a domestic broadcaster and has stalled as a consequence.

"We don't have a proven track record," admits Fuller, which is something Australian broadcasters often bank on. She contends that thanks to their track records and regulatory quotas, some established producers in Australia have become complacent, checking off the boxes on Australian content requirements rather than driving innovation. "Where we shine is that we are forced to come up with the most innovative shows that we can, because we don't have those prior credits," she says. While the MIP Junior award has given her team more exposure in Australia, fuelling talks with broadcasters and soliciting interest from other production companies, Fuller says her team will seek private funding outside of Australia to get the project completed if need be.

Digital convergence

Also this year, for the first time ever, a review is underway that will see digital platforms and services subjected to the same regulatory requirements as Australian free-to-air and subscription TV content. The new broader policy could potentially make videogames, apps and interactive online content eligible for the tax offset that was previously only available to TV and film producers.

It remains to be seen if the developments are good news for producers like Joanna Werner of Werner Film Productions, who has created an immersive online experience to accompany *Dance Academy* (the hit show is headed into its third series for ABC Australia). The first series' site, which Werner describes as "big and expensive," even picked up a Kidscreen Award for Best Website in 2011. Visitors to the current iteration have their own room at the boarding house, share photos and earn membership to access behind-the-scenes footage and how-to-dance video clips that roll out during the season.

"The regulations were developed before these platforms, and so, in some ways, the policy is old and doesn't hold up to the future," says Jenny Buckland, CEO of the Australian Children's Television Foundation, which worked with Werner to help produce and finance *Dance Academy*.

Changes abroad

The review also stands to affect Australia's free-to-air broadcasters that meet their children's drama quota through airing content on limited kid-specific timeslots. "Regulations could be loosened up so that you could screen kids shows on a digital channel and have it count for your content quota," notes Buckland.

Deirdre Brennan, GM and director of channels and branded services for Australasia at BBC Worldwide, says expanding platforms and new technologies is something to embrace, but she remains skeptical of changing the infrastructure that supports children's production without serious discussion and consultation from the industry.

"The quota system that sits with the commercial-free channels, and which has been the mainstay of local production funding is vital," says Brennan. "I would be wary of changes made to that system that aren't fully informed." The results of the convergence review won't be released for at least another six months, but an interim report being compiled now will give the Australian production industry an opportunity to weigh in. (3)

1440 Production's
Dig Deep Creek
brought home the MIP
Junior Kids Jury Award
from Cannes last fall
and is now on the hunt
for an Australian
broadcaster





TuningIn



Ten years young

CBBC imparts British history lessons layered with laughs

The UK's top-rated kidnets CBBC and CBeebies mark a decade on-air

When the BBC's dedicated kids channels CBBC and CBeebies branched out into the then-fledgling digital TV universe in February 2002, it was a move that raised more than a few eyebrows, particularly the founding of CBeebies. What business did a public broadcaster have in creating a channel solely for the under-six set after all?

Ten years later, CBeebies controller Kay Benbow can afford to crow a bit about what the channel has achieved. "I feel vindicated about having built a successful preschool channel," she says. Right from the beginning, the CBeebies team dedicated itself to producing, developing and acquiring shows that would blaze the trail in programming designed for and dedicated to preschoolers.

CBeebies rolled out as a commercial-free digital channel for kids under six, with a branded strand airing on BBC One and Two. At the same time, CBBC was refashioned, moving from a catch-all channel for kids under 14 to a dedicated digital channel (with blocks on BBC One and Two) focused on super-serving kids six to 12. And now, not only do the two channels sit side-by-side on air, but Benbow and CBBC controller Damian Kavanagh also have neighboring desks at the Beeb's new HQ in Salford.

"We sit next to each other and we're very aware of what the other is doing," says Benbow. While developing programming slates for totally different age groups, the two brands have one very strong element in common—a public service mandate to reflect the lives of British children and broadcast a schedule packed with multi-genre programming.

"All of our shows have public service at the heart of them," adds Kavanagh. "We help kids understand their place in the world."

Just the facts and lots of laughs So what do kids love on CBBC? Well, there's *Horrible Histories*, which Kavanagh explains is unabashedly about British history, but is viewed by kids as an amazing piece of comedy that just happens to impart historical facts. And then there's *Doctor Who* spin-off *Sarah Jane Adventures*—it immerses viewers in a world where kids tackle aliens, but it also happens to be underpinned by themes of belonging and finding family. Just that

small cross-section of the channel's offering shows how varied the sked is, and this year CBBC brought back live-action series *Tracy Beaker Returns* and *MI High*, and introduced new dramas *Combat Kids* and *Just William* to the mix.

Factual content also plays a big role on CBBC's sked. "We've had a lot of success with technology-based shows," says Kavanagh, such as *Richard Hammond's Blast Lab*, which sees kids compete in science-based challenges. He adds that shows illustrating interesting engineering feats are on his radar right now. Other factual series include culinary-focused *Gastronauts*, *The Big Performance*, where children tackle their stage fright; documentary *My Life*, which introduces kids to new places and people; and *The Newsround* specials that explore big issues in children's lives, like living with cancer and growing up in the care system.

Next on the agenda, Kavanagh says he'd like to beef up CBBC's comedy offering even more. In fact, he's looking for the next *Mr. Bean*. "We're putting out a call for an amazing character-based physical comedy," he says. The channel's current comic hits include *Little Howard's Big Questions*, *The Legend of Dick and Dom* and *I'm Sorry I've Got No Head*.

Mixed in with its British series, CBBC has a lineup of acquired shows from around the world, including *Prank Patrol*, *Wingin' It*, *Dead Gorgeous* and *Scooby-Doo*. Kavanagh's also interested in working with other like-minded producers and broadcasters on co-productions such as *Pet Squad*, produced with London-based studio Darral MacQueen, and *Splatalot*, produced with Canada's marble-media, Canuck net YTV and ABC Australia. Kavanagh says *Splatalot*, in particular, is ideal for CBBC because it embeds British performers right into the premise of the competition.

Let's ask the kids The CBBC team has a pool of knowledgeable programming consultants on permanent retainer—kids. Kavanagh's Stepping Out Team visits schools and talks with children multiple times a week to get feedback, criticism and ideas for new programming. For example, he says the channel is interested in creating a show for next holiday season about abandoned pets that illustrates how to be a good pet owner. To gain insight while developing the show idea, The Stepping Out Team went to schools to talk to kids about their pets.

For its part, CBeebies also continually talks to its viewers and tests content with its most valuable critics, as well as their parents. In fact, Benbow says talking to kids has just become a natural part of what the channel does.















Tuning In continued





CBeebies infuses music and comedy into the sked with Rastamouse (left) and Zingzillas (right)

"Never underestimate your audience," notes Benbow, who mines information from her littlest viewers for content direction and to gauge preschoolers' ever-evolving technological savvy. The CBeebies team spends time with playgroups, observes their likes and dislikes, and asks questions that are meaningful to the kids.

Benbow says previous sessions revealed that parents wanted more factual content and animal-based shows for their preschoolers. And that information went into the development of *Andy's Wild Adventures*, in which preschoolers go along with presenter Andy and his feline puppet on world adventures via green-screen technology and footage from BBC's natural history unit.

The littlest audience Like its sister channel does for older kids, CBeebies aims to provide preschoolers with content that reflects them and their communities, with a special commitment to depicting social and cultural diversity. As part of its remit to produce homegrown content, CBeebies caps its spend on acquisitions at 20%, and producers can expect CBeebies to supply between 10% and 24% of the production budget on shows it commissions. Benbow says the programming blends storytelling with music, arts and crafts, simple science and natural history. And last year's addition of *The Octonauts* and *Baby Jake* injected more humor into the lineup. Other current hit shows include *Mr. Bloom's Nursery*, pre-reading series *Alphablocks*, *Mister Maker* (arts and crafts) and *Zingzillas* (music).

Also returning this year are new seasons of *Tilly and Friends* and *Everything's Rosie*, both of which star animated female lead characters. "We've had some criticism over that and we have to explain to people that there is a balance," says Benbow. "There has been a question mark about there not being enough female leads in the past," she adds. Another one of her challenges is developing a combination of content for both the older and younger end of the CBeebies audience.

So the intention is for series like *Tilly and Friends* that appeal to the youngest viewers to dovetail with older-skewing *Grandpa in My Pocket* and *Rastamouse*, which tickle the funny bones of kids pushing six.

Routine is a big part of daily life for families with preschoolers, so CBeebies' dayparts are set up to reflect and coincide with the day-to-day pattern of children's lives, and they are integral to its brand strategy. Get Set Go gets kids moving in the morning, Discover and Do helps quench their curiosity during the day, followed by the Big Fun Time block in the afternoon and ending with Bedtime Hour, which includes gentle storytelling and wind-down series like In The Night Garden.

Early adapters Benbow explains that constantly checking in with her kid audience keeps her on track—particularly when it comes to the digital interests of tots and their parents. In the last two years alone, she's seen the rise of the iPhone and iPad and heard from parents about the need to make content available on the go. (Notably, the CBeebies iPlayer, available on the channel's website, has received more than 99.5 million program requests since 2010.)

"We make sure we have complementary content online," says Benbow. The Zingzillas website, for example, was designed as an immersive experience, and Benbow says the channel is planning on continuing with that level of interactivity for upcoming comedy series *Tree Fu Tom*, co-produced with FremantleMedia.

CBBC, meanwhile, revamped its entire site about a year ago, splitting the content into five clearly defined sections—games, watch, things to do, music and newsround—to let kids move across platforms and between brands more easily, which has brought monthly traffic up to a million users. The channel has also released online applications for *Sarah Jane Adventures*, *Horrible Histories* and *Tracy Beaker Returns*, each of which attracted more than 400,000 unique users in their launch weeks alone.—Kate Calder

Bridging the gap

Moving kids from CBeebies to CBBC

Besides keeping up with each other's programming, CBeebies controller Kay Benbow and Damian Kavanagh, CBBC controller, both say they hope their close proximity might help address the issue of migrating viewers from CBeebies to CBBC.

"There is an issue there. When they leave CBeebies, they aren't necessarily going to CBBC," says Kavanagh. The channel's regular kid research sessions have revealed that viewers graduate from CBeebies into a wide open world of entertainment that includes other kidnets, online content and adult primetime programming. He says building a bridge from CBeebies to CBBC has to be done subtly with careful attention paid to not aligning the channel with a preschool angle that would definitely be a turn off for

"It's important to breach that gap, but we're not sure yet if it will be a content-based strategy," says Kavanagh. He says the channel is conducting research now, fielding strategies with kid viewers that could potentially involve sharing online content or focusing on a campaign aimed at parents.





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Russia remains free-to-air

Although a few dedicated kids channels have managed to set up shop, US hits and older Soviet toons airing on free commercial channels remain the staple TV diet for Russian kids



Russian kids watch classic US series like Scooby-Doo on CTC, Russia's most popular channel with 4 to 15s

he pay-TV market in Russia is opening up slightly—albeit at a snail's pace. Cartoon Network moved into the country in 2009, and both Nickelodeon and Disney went to air there at the end of 2010. However, the small cumulative reach of these channels (just 3.7% of the Russian population tuned into Nickelodeon last year) is keeping them off Eurodata TV's ratings radar for the time being.

Traditional terrestrial channels with modest kids blocks still catch the most eyeballs in Russia. December 2011 viewing stats from Eurodata show that the best-performing channel in the territory among children four to 15, with a good 8% lead in market share, is free-to-air CTC. The channel offers children's blocks before school and on early weekday afternoons from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The afternoon block registered an average share of 39.8% among kids four to 15 from January to June, and it aired some of the territory's most popular US children's series, including *Scooby-Doo*, *Little Mermaid*, *Casper* and *Aladdin*.

Russian favorite *Eralash* (a series of sketch comedy shorts that air randomly throughout the daypart) came in as the number three kids show in Russia. And animated homegrown series *GogoRiki* came in eighth in December.

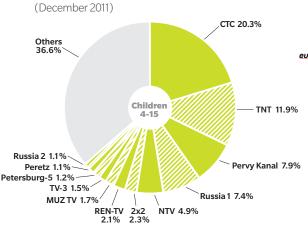
The second channel offering significant kids content is TNT, which also airs before-school programming, as well as a lunchtime block from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. (just before CTC's afternoon block starts). The net took a 29.2% share in viewers from January to June 2011. The block's best-performing shows include slightly more up-to-date kids fare such as *Jimmy Neutron, SpongeBob SquarePants* and *Ben 10: Alien Force*.

After that, the assortment of kids programming available on other generalist channels in the territory becomes slim. Pervy Canal comes in at number three, with a 7.9% share of kids. It actually has no dedicated children's blocks, but catches kid viewers watching news broadcasts with their parents, as well as family-oriented movies. Its broadcast of *Ice Age 3*, for example, boosted the channel's ranking in the first half of 2011.

Eurodata's stats from January to June 2011 show that TV3's weekend kids block (6:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.) scored a 7.8% market share with kids four to 15. And Peretz Channel's weekday morning block (6 a.m. to 8 a.m.), which has a stockpile of old Russian children's content, registered a 6.3% share, or roughly 20,000 kids. There's also exclusive animation channel 2X2, which airs boy-skewing US and Japanese animated content such as *The Simpsons, Futurama, American Dad, Naruto Shippuden* and *Avatar the Last Air Bender*. However, boys at the top end of the age category make up 78.5% of its kid audience.

In the evenings, Russian kids watch primetime content on generalist channels with their parents. Family movies in particular are a key draw. *Stuart Little*, for example, drew in a 41.3% share (693,900 kids) when it aired at the beginning of June on CTC. The other topperforming family show is scripted comedy series *Veroniny*, a local adaptation of *Everybody Loves Raymond*, which also had a 41.3% share on CTC in the first half of 2011. –Kate Calder

Market share



Eurodata TV Worldwide is a French company specializing in TV audience ratings research and market intelligence that offers TV data as well as expertise and insight into the performance of TV shows in more than 90 countries Ratings information is provided directly by research institutes in each country, which, like Eurodata's parent company Médiamétrie, measure daily television audience ratings. For more information, contact deputy sales director Joanna Szybist (iszvbist@eurodatatv.com. 33-1-4758-9434).



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Produced by: Tiny Island Productions Genre: 3D Animated TV Series Format: 26 episodes x 22 mins Language: English

Language: English Distribution: Tiny Isl

Tiny Island Productions (North America/Asia); Classic Media (Other territories)

Email: davidk@tinyisland.net
Tel: +65 6473 7357



Mr Moon

You know Mr Moon. We all do. Just look out of your window at night - there he is! Climbing up his ladder and taking his place in the star-studded, indigo sky. But have you ever wondered what Mr Moon does when he's not shining down on us? Well, that, my friends, is where our story begins. Mr Moon is an adventurer - and who wouldn't be, with the whole Universe for a playground? With his Supafast Moon Rocket and his best friends Silva and Gold Star, Mr Moon zips around exploring planets, stars, constellations, black holes, nebulae and galaxies.

Produced by: Sparky Animation, Gallileo Ltd &

Title Entertainment
Genre: 3D Animated TV Series
Format: 52 episodes x 11 mins

Language: English

TX: Disney Channel (UK), TVO
(Canada), Knowledge (Canada),

SCN (Canada), ABC (Australia), OKTO (Singapore), ATV (Turkey), TVNZ (New Zealand) kcwong@sparkyanim.com

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Franklin and Friends IIII

Franklin – he's older, wiser and coming out of his shell! The brand new CGI series, Franklin and Friends, co-produced by IFW and Nelvana, features new episodes for kids aged 4-7 based on the award-winning books by Paulette Bourgeois and Brenda Clark. Franklin has been an international favourite for decades - keeping children laughing and learning with heartwarming stories focused on personal growth and empowerment, building self-esteem and independence. With over 65 million Franklin books sold worldwide and 100 titles in print in over 30 languages, 2011 marks the 25th anniversary of the first Franklin book release.

Produced by: Infinite Frameworks and Nelvana

Ltd.

Genre: 3D Animated TV Series Format: 52 episodes x 11 mins Language: English

Distribution: Treehouse

Email: fyeo@frameworks.com.sg Tel: +65 6222 7888



Super Mamas IIII

Jessie Young and Mrs. Brown are bored housewives who masquerade as Sunfield Grove's heroic Super Mamas. Problem is: they think they have superpowers when in fact they don't. Moreover, their delusion magnifies with every repeated fortunate turn of events. The arrival of a REAL Super Mama (Helen Morris) threatens to gatecrash the phonies' party and expose the sham. One day, an intangible evil power descends on the suburb and the three of them have to decide if they should put their differences aside, and battle the villain together.

Produced by: Vividthree Productions Genre: 3D Animated TV Series Format: 26 episodes x 13 mins

Language: English

Email: charles@vividthree.com/ wilson@vividthree.com Tel: +65 6270 0818/+65 9818 4157



Guess How Much I Love You ITHO

A luscious new animated preschool series that follows the adventures of the Nutbrown Hares and their woodland friends. It is the first TV adaptation of Sam McBratney and Anita Jeram's bestselling picture book, which has sold 22 million copies worldwide.

Produced by: Scrawl Studios & SLR

Productions

Genre: 2D Animated TV Series Format: 52 episodes x 11 mins

Language: Englis

Email: jeong@scrawlstudios.com

+65 6225 0910



The Adventures of Bradley and Friends ••••

The Adventures of Bradley and Friends is a CGI animated, pre-school series that follows the adventures of a lively young boy on his travels to story worlds from around the globe. When Bradley turns the pop-up pages of his favourite bedtime book, they magically transform into an accessible world. Bradley is no longer simply reading a story: he and Plane are flying within it! Once landed, Bradley and Plane meet new friends, see different lands, and rise to exciting challenges.

Produced by: Red Kite Animations Ltd -

An August Media Holdings

Enterprise

Genre: 3D Animated TV Series Format: 52 episodes x 11 mins

Language: English

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JustLaunched

Mr. Young YTV's series sells on new star power and stellar Canuck ratings



Timing was everything for the March 2011 launch of YTV's *Mr. Young*, a live-action tween comedy about a teen whiz kid who, à la Doogie Howser, graduates college at the tender age of 14 and finds himself back in high school teaching his former peers. The network chose to take advantage of a March Break launch and avoided competing against the new fall seasons of network heavy-hitters like *American Idol* and *The Amazing Race*. And with a global sale to Disney XD in hand, Nelvana Enterprises is now busy racking up more sales worldwide.

Right on cue Corus VP of marketing, kids, family and international Laura Baehr says pre-promotion began just three weeks before the March 1 launch to introduce the series' unknown actors to the YTV audience via TV spots that aired during hosted segments, Big Fun Movies and Saturday morning toon block Crunch. The channel also featured the show on a splash page on YTV.com, which averages 600,000 unique views per month, and began building hype pre-launch on Facebook.

"We didn't want to introduce something and have it not be accessible," says Baehr. The marketing was aimed with just enough time to pique interest and give kids the chance to act on their curiosity by looking online and then tuning into the show soon after. And Corus makes sure that two to three eps are available online for VOD viewing, allowing kids to get emotionally involved in the show and then make it available to them whenever they want it.

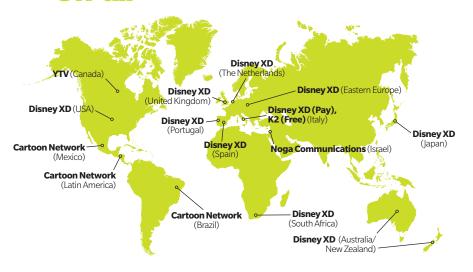
Within two months, *Mr. Young*, produced by Vancouver's Thunderbird Films in association with YTV, was ranking as the number-one show with kids six to 11 across all Canadian networks, beating out *SpongeBob Squarepants* and *iCarly*. YTV greenlit production on a second season this past summer, and the series has since been picked up by Disney XD globally, as well as by Cartoon Network Latin American.

Creating a star Baehr says the series had what her team calls the Corus Advantage—a well-played launch and subsequent success in Canada that distributor Nelvana was able to show off to broadcasters around the world. And Baehr explains that part of the series' quick rise to the top of the ratings charts is due in part to YTV's ability to make stars out of its actors. The show's lead, Brendan Meyer, who plays Adam Young, was featured in YTV pre-promotional spots and hosted dayparts leading up the launch and was then showcased at live appearances, including the Canadian finale of YTV's *The Next Star.* Since then he's recently graced a bevy of red-carpet events on behalf of Disney XD.

Banking assets Corus has also developed a tool kit with assets and optional promotional spots that broadcasters can use to promote the series. "Of course, Disney XD has its own methods of rolling out shows," says Baehr, adding that a valuable asset is having access to the actors for live events.

Going forward, the production team is getting every last inch out of the set by filming new exclusive interviews and behind-the-scenes footage for online content. For the first season, Thunderbird produced online game Extra Credit, in which kids are encouraged to log in during the show to answer trivia questions based on the eps. Thunderbird is now working on beefing up the show's website with character bios and videos, along with new games, including Drop Deck, powered by a swapping engine where kids collect and trade cards that contain media like personal messages from the cast, show clips and exclusive taped material. –Kate Calder

On-air





Pioeine An early peek at shows on the development track



Driftwood Bay Precocious five-year-old

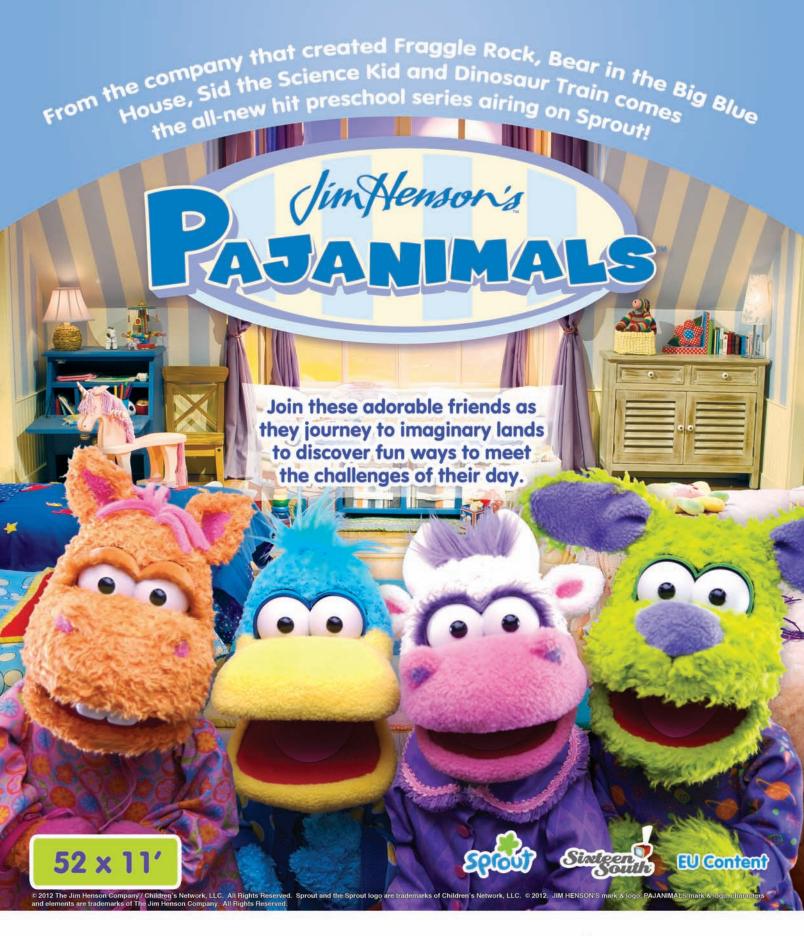
Lily lives with her wood-carver Dad in a little hut on the beach packed with jars, knick-knacks, driftwood and some special friends that Lily crafts from salvage washed up by the sea. From her bedroom window, she can see the island of Driftwood Bay, where the characters she creates come to life. Every day the sea delivers up a new treasure that sparks Lily's imagination, sending her and her clever friend Gull off to experience fantastical adventures on the tiny island.

Studio: Sixteen South, Belfast, Northern Ireland

Style: Mixed media. Alongside photography and watercolors, the characters, backdrops and landscapes are created using real artwork made entirely from beach salvage such as stones, ceramics, glass, fabrics, wood, metals and plastics.

Format: 52 x seven minutes **Budget:** US\$4.1 million

Status: Sixteen South has an animation test, pilot and trailer complete and aims to head into production this May, based on some keen interest from broadcasters. The first 26 eps should available in summer 2013. Sixteen's creative director Colin Williams says he's also currently exploring co-production opportunities.



KIDSCREEN 2012 international@henson.com +1.323.802.1500





Channel Japan's Ivick Von Salza the Little Lumberjack are working on their second series about an optimistic little creature named Yum Yum who lives on Planet Nuf, where everyone is an adorable, pastel-colored cyclops. Living with his parents and sister Dyvi, Yum Yum encounters challenges as he explores the world. For example, the siblings make several attempts to reach an apple attached to a high branch, but it isn't until they work together with the intent of sharing the apple that things work out for them. The narrator invokes regular audience participation and Yum Yum discovers that overcoming unusual circumstances and everyday life obstacles is easier when armed with teamwork and a smile.

Studio: Rocket Cartoons, Costa Rica

Style: 2D animation Format: 104 x 5.5 minutes/26 x 22 minutes

Budget: US\$3.9 million **Status:** Rocket Cartoons has four completed short eps, and depending on presales and financing, production is

scheduled to start between

August of this year and

August 2013.



Studio: Play Entertainment, Rome, Italy

Style: 2D animation Format: 78 x 7 minutes **Budget:** US\$5.1 million

Status: Still in the early stages, Play Entertainment has a bible and two scripts ready and is working on a pilot ep for April. The prodco is in talks with a key Italian broadcaster, which it hopes to announce by MIPTV. In the meantime, the prodco is looking for international partners to help finance and build the project. Estimated delivery date is April 2013.

to healthy eating, the series stars characters known as Elfoodz who are divided into five groups that mimick food categories: Carboids, Protos, Lipis, Salis and Vitam. Elfoodz live on a lush magic floating island that is affected by bad eating habits and unhealthy diets of the world's children. In each episode a child is projected onto the island with a problem caused by poor diet that the Elfoodz solve with a healthy food, all while battling against Synthec, owner of the world's biggest junk food company.

NowTrending-Media

What's bubbling up in kid content culture

Angry Birds flock to TV

Those malcontent wingless birds are sling-shotting themselves into small-screen territory step by step. At CES last month, Finnish game developer Rovio struck a deal with Samsung to bring the three-yearold addictive app to the company's smart TV, which will now provide free



access to the game. And late last year, Rovio purchased Finnish animation studio Kombo to work on Angry Birds animated shorts for Nickelodeon. The first, Christmas special "Wreck the Halls," aired State-side in December.



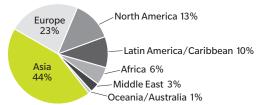
You say it's your birthday

Tapping into the ongoing trend of giving kids a chance to engage with their favorite TV characters, Disney Junior's new "It's Your Birthday! Celebration" sends a free personalized video greeting and/or a phone call from characters like Mickey, Minnie or Jake. Parents go to www.disneyjunior.com/celebration where they upload a photo of their little one along with his/her age and name to be incorporated into the video. Parents can also sign up for email reminders that start five weeks before their child's birthday, and the site offers party tips and printable paper crafts featuring characters from Mickey Mouse Clubhouse and Jake and the Neverland Pirates.

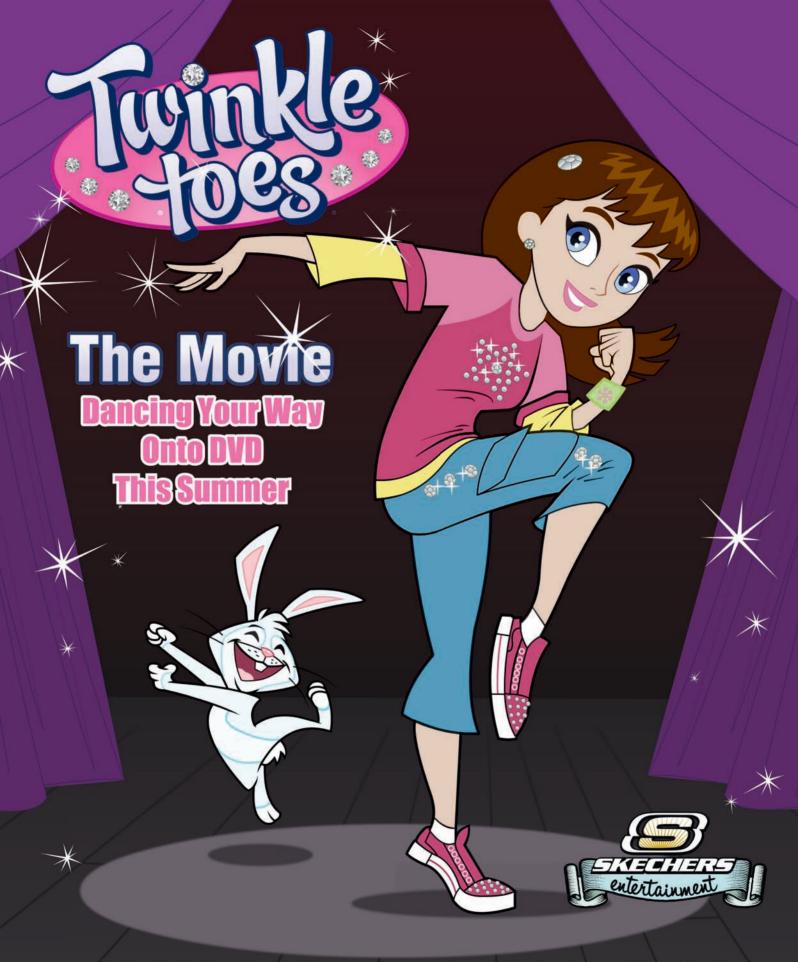
Who's online?

Swedish web-tracking service Pingdom estimates that 2.1 billion people now use the internet, about 30% of the Earth's population. Way back in 2000, the worldwide number of internet users was a mere 360 million. Other Pingdom stats from December 2011 show there are: 555 million websites, more than 800 million Facebook users, and 225 million Twitter accounts (Lady Gaga had the most followers with 18.1 million people).

Internet users by region



Source: Internet World Stats, January 2012. Pingdom



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What do Kids really want to watch?



Kids TV Report
Trends & Hits

in Children's Programming



What not to pitch

One of the most desirable consumer demos, 12 to 17s, is a tough nut to crack.

But are marketers who are trying to reach teens squashing their own efforts by sticking to long-held assumptions that just don't work anymore? It's time to dispel some youth marketing myths.

BY GARY RUSAK

the youth marketing game, it's paramount that communication with the core demo be free of generational biases and falsely held assumptions. So says Bill Carter, partner of Burlington, Vermont-based Fuse Youth Marketing Agency, who recently hosted the "10 Myths About Youth Marketing That Are Holding Back Your Brand" webinar for licensing industry org LIMA.



Carter, who is also an adjunct professor at both St. John's University in New York and Champlain College in Burlington, has helped his agency build a client list that includes Mountain Dew, Gatorade and Converse. He has built his reputation on knowing exactly how to speak to the 12 to 17 demo, and perhaps more importantly, on knowing when efforts are going to fall flat.

"A strategy driven by myth leads to irrelevance for young people, and that to us is the worst-case scenario," he says. "Recently, the London Olympic Committee showed a true misunderstanding of youth culture when they chose The Clash's "London Calling" to wrap around all of their marketing."

"Spider-Man 3 made US\$60 million on its opening day, but when the new Grand Theft Auto came out last year, it grossed US\$300 million in sales on its opening day. Do the math."

-Bill Carter, partner Fuse Youth Marketing Agency

Carter explains that while the organizers might have chosen the song for its "catchy refrain" they glossed over the images of despair and economic frustration evoked by its lyrics. "The song says, 'A nuclear error, I have no fear, London is drowning, but I live by the river,' yet the London Olympic Committee is saying 'Hey, come watch our volleyball games and have a good time.' It was an egregious error."

The more things change...

Sure, technology permeates the lives of under-18s in ways that their parents can't comprehend, but to believe that this generation is different in every way from its forebearers is the first myth that Carter says needs to be buried. "In fact, the concerns and beliefs remain consistent throughout the generations," he says. According to his research, teens and youth have consistently ranked things such as family, jobs, money and independence in the same order of importance since the term "teenager" was coined in the 1920s.

"Hooking your strategy to the longstanding truths what young people care about means that you will have a long-term strategy," he says.

The next myth that needs to go is that matters of the environment and its conservation are crucial to this generation of tweens and teens. "Our research shows that only about 2% of young people rank the environment as a key concern," says Carter. "Ten times that many rank money as a key concern."

As a result, he warns against putting too much stock in using marketing messages that revolve around the

environment as a way of forging a relationship between teens and a brand. "The young people we surveyed don't see the immediate impact of environmental pursuits," he contends.

Social media, not necessarily where it's at

As for current marketing darling, social media, another myth that Carter would like to explode is that young people dominate its useage. He says this group does tend to view social media as a trustworthy source of information about brands, but explains that the demo doesn't find it all-consuming. "There are 800 million people on Facebook, but only between 20% and 25% are youth consumers," he says. "You can't automatically assume that all social media is being steered by youth."

Carter points to Twitter as an example of a medium that is actually dominated by an older demographic, but is often [and mistakenly] considered a good way to reach youth.

Gaming doesn't matter?

According to Carter, there is no brand robust enough to totally ignore the ever-growing gaming culture. "Spider-Man 3 made US\$60 million on its opening day, but when the new Grand Theft Auto came out last year, it grossed US\$300 million in sales on its opening day," says Carter. "Do the math—its appeal can't really be disputed."

The power of gaming and the structure of games with their intense interactivity and rewards for excelling has become a core tenet for the demographic. As such, youth marketers should have a full appreciation of gaming and attempt to integrate gaming concepts into their multimedia campaigns.

Don't forget about print and TV

Interestingly, in this age of digital media, Carter would like to lay waste to the notion that old media—read print and TV—are dying and are ineffective methods for reaching 12 to 17s. "Print is not dying," says Carter, "I can't stress that enough. It's not only not dying but it continues to thrive in the speciality category."

Carter points to the growth of publications that focus on a particular niche like music, sports or gaming, and adds that many youth believe that reading the printed word and seeing printed pictures is actually a "better experience" than reading something via a digital device.

"Online content is so easily accessible that it's not special anymore," he says. "It's free, it's mass, while printed material retains that unique feel and has a premium attached to it."

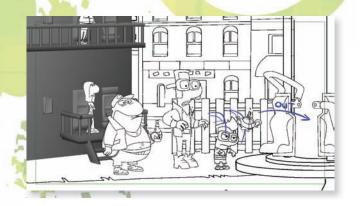
Another medium that some have put out to pasture that still has life is television, says Carter. "Young people are still watching 2.5 hours of TV a day—it still has that power."

Carter says it is a mistake for youth-oriented brands to ignore a medium that still is a major part of the demo's everyday life. "They might watch TV differently now," he says. "They are on the internet and maybe chatting with friends, but they are most definitely still watching TV." \bullet

The Toon Boom Pipeline Solutions for Animation Pre-Production and Production

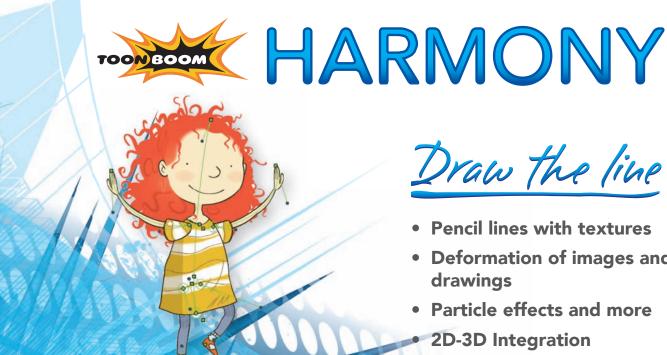


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Looking for a heroic 2012



Warner Bros.
Consumer
Products gets
ready to take
DC Universe
up, up and
away at retail

he much-anticipated debut of the "DC Nation" block on Cartoon Network this year is being readied, and so too are a whack of licensing initiatives from Warner Bros. Consumer Products to support the launch both in North America and across EMEA.

"The block will let us have a real smorgasbord of creativity and ideas," says Karen McTier, EVP of domestic licensing and worldwide marketing at WBCP. "It will allow us to experiment and bring different characters to the forefront—it's like a giant animated sandbox."

While fall scheduling details are still under wraps, Mc-Tier says that the flexible block will be a way to explore the immense DC catalogue of content. Warner Bros.' parent company paid US\$4 billion in 2009 to sew up the rights to existing DC-based series, movie events, interstitials and liveaction behind-the-scenes content from the major theatrical releases and animated mini-series.

McTier says that WBCP is currently in discussions with retail partners about setting up short-window exclusives that ${\cal P}$

could coincide with programming events such as a mini-series. "It's a great platform, and retail is excited about it," she says. "We are able to bring them in at the early stages so they can be a part of our planning process from the beginning."

While products directly associated with the block won't likely be on retail shelves in the US until 2013, McTier did say that consumers can expect to see WBCP mine some lesser-exploited DC characters that will be pushed to the forefront in the block.

"We are going to be telling a whole new story with Green Lantern," she says. "And Young Justice will also be prominent."

While a number of deals are still to be signed, WBCP recently announced the extension of its partnership with toyco Mattel as the DC Universe's master toy partner, along with Lego for construction toys and Rubie's Costume Company for dress-up. Additionally, the company continues to roll out product under the iconic Batman and Superman brands. New products more closely associated with upcoming feature *The Dark Knight Rises* (due in theaters July 2012) and *Man of Steel* (tentatively scheduled for a June 2013 release) are also expected to be announced in the coming months.

While details are still being locked down, McTier says WBCP is always looking to add partners that can complement its domestic portfolio with innovative and unique products in all categories, including toys, apparel, domestics, home goods and themed entertainment. However, DC efforts will not be confined to North America. While there are no firm plans for the DC Nation block to hit European airwaves at press time, Bruno Schwobthaler, SVP of sales and business development for WBCP EMEA, is excited about the further expansion of the DC licensing program into the territories he oversees.

"With superheroes, there is room for substantial growth," he says. "There are a lot of markets where we can grow and a lot of new categories, new target demos and new territories." Specifically, Schwobthaler says he sees a great deal of potential in the teen and tween girls categories with under-explored IP such as Super Girl, Wonder Woman and Bat Girl.

"The assets are definitely there," he says, adding that there are hundreds of pieces of artwork and character IP that can be manipulated. "There is a pretty clear roadmap in terms of content rollout, so we are busy figuring out potential categories we can cover."

Besides the traditional categories of apparel and toys, Schwobthaler says that he is interested in taking the DC catalogue into categories that have never been fully exploited in Europe.

"If you look at something like cellphone accessories or USB keys, they didn't even exist a few years ago," he says. "I think that by applying creative designs to those categories, it's almost unlimited. That is the beauty of it." –Gary Rusak



Video to go

Fisher-Price extends electronics line with first-ever DVR for preschoolers

isher-Price launched into the tech space with its Kid-Tough line a few years ago, producing preschool-friendly versions of MP3 players, cameras and other digital devices. Now it's upped the ante with a move into the TV space, unveiling the Kid-Tough Portable DVR at the Consumer Electronics Show held in Las Vegas last month.

"It's built ruggedly to withstand rough preschool use," says Yvonne Lopata, senior director of marketing at Fisher-Price. "The controls are intuitive for preschoolers, including simple touchscreen navigation."

The way it works is the device's base can be connected to a TV or set-top box and then programmed to record children's TV shows up to 24 hours in advance of their airtimes. When the shows are recorded, the easy-to-navigate menu lets kids call up desired content themselves and watch it on the compatible 3.5-inch screen. The device has the added benefit of being the first of its kind at mass retail.

"There is really nothing like it on the market," says Lopata. "You can record anything you want from the TV and take it anywhere you want to go. There is no need to buy additional content like DVDs and worry about them getting lost or scratched."

The built-in hard drive allows about two hours of recording time, and the battery should last between four to six hours. The device has an SRP of US\$149.99 and comes in either blue or pink. Other accessories, including headphones



(US\$14.99), car charger (US\$14.99) and a carrying case (\$29.99), are being launched in tandem with the device.

Initial reaction at CES was positive, and Fisher-Price will be featuring the product prominently at Toy Fair before launching a major marketing campaign in the spring. "Retailers immediately saw the uniqueness and benefits that we are bringing to the marketplace," says Lopata.

The value proposition will be foremost in Fisher-Price's marketing message. "The great thing about this device is that there is no need to buy additional content," she says. "Families can reuse content that they have already purchased."

The Fisher-Price Kid-Tough Portable DVR will hit major retail shelves including Walmart, Toys 'R' Us, Target, Kmart and Amazon in May.—Gary Rusak

LicenseeLowdown

Simon & Schuster UK makes a licensing push

Who Meg Wang, former media and entertainment editorial director at Penguin Children's Books, moved over to rival Simon & Schuster late last year to take the post of editorial director for licensed characters. The newly created position signals a clear shift in focus for the UK arm of the long-standing publishing company. "I have been reminding everyone that Simon & Schuster has a licensing program," says Wang. "My challenge right now is to get the word out that we are indeed interested in licensing."

What Simon & Schuster UK currently has a handful of licenses, chiefly led by a deal with Nickelodeon that has seen success with SpongeBob SquarePants and Dora the Explorer products. Additionally, a design-led program for The Octonauts has more

than a dozen titles in formats including e-Books, hardcover and mass-market paperback being released throughout 2012.

Latest Innovation The publisher is banking on new license Mike the Knight from HIT Entertainment. S&S has plans to launch the first five titles in June, including *Meet Mike the Knight*, two additional storybooks, a sticker book and a novelty sound book.

What's Next With just a handful of licenses in its fold, Wang will be looking to bolster the catalogue in a managed way. "We are looking to grow, but not exponentially," explains Wang. "We are being quite selective because we want to take on licenses where we know we can fulfill our end of the bargain."

She adds that certain IPs don't translate well into the UK market, a lesson S&S has learned from lessthan-stellar programs based on US-centric brands in the past. She adds that she will be looking to strike a balance between mass and specialty properties.

To that end, Wang will be hitting the trade show circuit, while keeping her eyes on non-traditional avenues for new and interesting opportunities. "Everyone used to say that you needed TV presence for an IP," Wang says. "But I don't think that is true anymore. There are online properties and apps that have become quite popular and are interesting to us."

Contact Meg Wang, editorial director, licensed characters (44-207-316-2604, meg.wang@simonandschuster.co.uk) – Gary Rusak



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Little show, big impact

Charitable and government partnerships lead the way for **The WotWots'** innovative marketing program

inding fresh and relevant ways to discuss environmental issues with children was the impetus behind the development of mixed-media preschool series *The WotWots* for creator Martin Bayton in 2009. And now, through a series of innovative partnerships, he is starting to see that goal realized.

"When my children were growing up, it was very difficult to talk to them about wildlife because there was this guilt trip associated with it," Bayton says from his home in Wellington, New Zealand. "There was such a focus on what terrible things we did to the planet. That is one of the reasons we did this. We want to depict the animals in a way that should be joyful, not saturated with this feeling that they are all dying out—the series is about delighting kids and teaching that there is a rich and diverse world out there"

The resulting series *The WotWots*—produced by New Zealand-based Pukeko Pictures and crafted at *Lord of the Rings* house WETA Workshop—features two siblings from outer space who end up exploring planet Earth in their steam-powered spaceship after it lands smack-dab in the middle of a zoo.

The 11-minute episodes quickly found a home on TV 2 in New Zealand in 2009 and have since been exported to The Hub in the US, ABC Australia and Treehouse in Canada. Recently, the series has even found success as a rare Western import on China's CCTV children's channel.

However, while Pukeko is following a traditional licensing path for the series, Bayton says that the property is also suited for innovative partnerships with charitable and government organizations.

"If motivations align, we hope it can create a new platform," says Bayton. "We wanted to make the choice to align ourselves with organizations that have bigger reach. We are trying to be very niche and work with organizations that have an absolute marriage with our ideals."

Pukeko got the ball rolling with a deal that saw The WotWots serve as the first character ambassadors for the Ministry of Health's B4 School Checks program in New Zealand. The initiative offers a comprehensive assessment of a four-year-old child's health and development prior to starting kindergarten.

The result of the partnership is that every child receiving a B4 School Check now gets a free WotWots coloring book/activity set and a chance to see walk-around DottyWot and SpottyWot (the main characters) making appearances at Childhood Centres across the country. The program started in August 2011 and the partnership will run for a year.

Another example of a marketing partnership that falls a bit outside of the norm is the brand's recent collaboration with Canadian charitable organization Earth Rangers.

"When we were approached by Earth Rangers, it had exactly the same ethos we had," says Bayton. "The organization wanted to find a way to engage children [about the environment] without that guilt trip, so it was a wonderful fit."

Earth Rangers was founded in 2001 with a mandate to focus on helping kids understand the importance of protecting biodiversity and adopting sustainable behaviors.

In cooperation with Pukeko Pictures, a pair of two-minute interstitials were produced and broadcast late last year during airings of *The WotWots* on Treehouse and The Hub. The interstitials focused on Earth Rangers' "Back to the Wild!" campaign. The shorts feature The WotWots interacting with endangered animals such as the monarch butterfly, the spotted turtle, the American marten and the plains buffalo.

"The shorts tell the audience incredible facts about the buffalo and the monarch butterfly, but focus on their extraordinary qualities, not on the fact that they are disappearing," says Bayton.

While Pukeko and Bayton will continue to seek out charitable and governmental partnerships, that doesn't mean that a full-blown licensing program will take a back seat.

"The commercial environment is so hard that even if you have a success, you aren't going to recoup your costs without licenses," says Bayton. "So I expect we'll be leading out with books and educational toys and DVDs and educational games. Those categories definitely fit." –Gary Rusak









The Pajanimals tucks in US licensing program

When troubadour Céline Dion praised *The Pajanimals* and began to sing a lullaby from the 26×11 -minute series on a prominent US TV morning show, you could say the folks at The Jim Henson Company were more than a little pleased.

"It was amazing," says Melissa Segal, SVP of global consumer products at TJHC. "We didn't have anything to do with it, that's for sure. She said she sings it to her kids at night—you couldn't ask for better press!"

The clip has since become a YouTube hit and could be an indication of the success awaiting the live-action puppetry series, which currently airs on US preschool diginet Sprout, when it steps into the licensing realm later this year.

"Licensees have been interested since we started airing interstitials on Sprout in 2008," says Segal. "But I think they wanted to wait until there was enough exposure."

To that end, TJHC has just signed on master toy licensee Tomy, which will create a full line of plush featuring the series' main characters Apollo, Squacky and Sweetpea Sue. NCircle has signed on for DVDs and home entertainment products and SarahMax Apparel Group will be looking after the all-important sleepwear category.

The lines are set for a soft launch at US retailers this fall, with a broader push planned for 2013. "We are looking to launch perhaps with an exclusive retail partner and then go wider after the initial test," says Segal.

While the show has a bedtime focus for its preschool demographic, Segal says the licensing program will use "bedtime as an anchor," but expand into a wider range of products for the younger portion of the demo, zoning in on the one- to three-year-old market.

"It's an interesting way in," says Segal. "The show is about a lot more than sleep. It's about the social and emotional issues that little kids go through."

Segal's now looking at filling secondary categories like health & beauty. She says shampoo and toothbrushes could be a successful licensing avenue for the brand, and she's also keeping her eyes peeled for home décor and music-related licensees.

"It's very merchandisable," Segal says. "It appeals to the same age group that Barney or Teletubbies does—we think there is an opportunity in the market." – Gary Rusak

BookBet The False Prince



The first book of the new Ascendance Trilogy from Jennifer A. Nielsen, author of Elliot and the Goblin War, will be published in hardcover by Scholastic Press in April. Aimed at a wide eight to 14 audience, The False Prince is a 368-page fantasy that weaves the tale of Conner, a nobleman of the court in a faraway land where war is imminent, and a cunning orphan named Sage, who must play the role of the long-lost son of the King. While Sage knows that Connor's motives might be questionable, there are layers of intrigue and deceit that he and the readers couldn't possibly predict. Let's just say that life is never easy for The False Prince. Scholastic is expecting big things from the trilogy and is hoping to tap into the undeniable thirst for well-constructed fantasy in the marketplace. —Gary Rusak

TopToys

UK bestsellers in 2011











Source: NPD EuroToys UK PoS service





THE FUTURISTIC EPIC VAMPIRE SAGA



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How apps and social media are affecting kids' TV consumption in the UK

BY DEAN C. WELLER AND THE GENERATION MEDIA INSIGHT TEAM

ast October, we assembled a focus group of
British elementary school students with the
goal of examining their relationship with
media. We presented the kids with images of
brands and asked them to identify the object,
celebrity or character as "cool" or "not cool."
There weren't many surprises. SpongeBob:
Cool! Rihanna: Cool! Hannah Montana: Not cool!

Into the mix, we added a number of smart phones and tablet devices. Not surprisingly, opening a discussion about iPhones and iPads with eight-year-old children elicited a reaction not dissimilar to handing out a bunch of M&M's—the kids got very excited and very loud rather quickly. Their knowledge of the Apple brand was striking, but perhaps more significant was the fact that despite their awareness, none of these children were in possession of their own iPad or iPhone. Instead, they had regular access via their parents, siblings and even grandparents. They wanted to acquire their own Apple device "really, really" badly and lamented their current short-term access.

In addition to iPads, children have ready access to laptops, mobile phones and the Godfather of all these screens—the television. And as they all vie for kids' attention, which screen is winning out? How does the multitude of options affect kids' consumption of media? Generation Media partnered with top UK kids website Swapit to investigate.

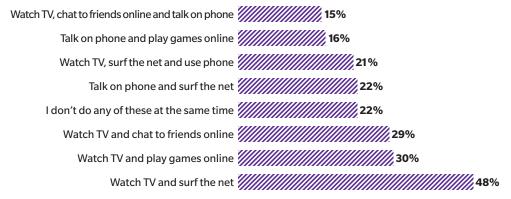
Managing multiple screens

Generation distributed surveys to more than 1,000 children in the UK, ages seven to 18. As it turns out, we found that kids still have their eyes locked to the TV screen. According to UK ratings tracker BARB, the rate of TV viewing for all children increased by 1.5% in the last year. Our research also showed that 50% admit to watching more than two hours per day, and one in 10 are glued to the goggle-box for five hours every day.

Regarding internet usage, the results depicted a fascinating journey as children grow up. At the younger end of the scale, kids are more focused on the TV screen with only one-third of seven- to 10-year-olds spending more time surfing the net than watching TV. Yet when the same question was



How multitasking 7 to 18s spend their time in the UK



Source: Generation Media and Swapit, sample size: 1,332 kids ages 7 to 18

put to 15- to 18-year-olds, 52% said they spent more time online than watching TV. So it would seem that around the time a child becomes a teenager, the lion's share of their attention shifts from TV to the internet.

That said, it is not as simple as choosing between watching TV or surfing the web. If there's one thing children (notably girls) are good at, it's multitasking. Almost half (48%) of the children surveyed boasted that they watch TV and surf the net simultaneously. There's even evidence of kids using three screens at once, with 15% of respondents stating they are capable of watching TV, chatting to friends online and talking on their phones at the same time. Kids' attention spans have always been short, but our research shows that they need far more stimulation now to sustain their attention.

After TVs, phones are unquestionably the most accessible personal gadget for children. Of those surveyed, 36% own Android phones (although it's worth noting that iPhone and BlackBerry are more recognizable as brand names). Meanwhile, 48% of our respondents have a parent who owns an Android phone or tablet—and of these, 84% are allowed access. Coupled with this is the fact that kids inherit older handsets when their parents upgrade, meaning that more and more, kids are navigating their way around increasingly up-to-date technology.

Kids are also savvy when it comes to smartphone apps. $Angry\ Birds$ rates as a favorite across all age groups and 19% of the seven- to 10-year-olds surveyed had downloaded the game. Qualitative data also suggests that kids prefer apps to console video games, as they find them easier and quicker to use, with girls viewing console-based games as more of a boyish pastime.

The social network

But it's the Facebook app downloads that open up a whole new avenue of investigation. Social networking is a key activity for older teens, with 83% of 15- to 18-year-olds belonging to at least one social network. But turning to the seven to 10s, we see that almost half of these children are connected, spending up to an hour a day managing their online social circles. There are a host of social networks available to children, and a natural order of progression has evolved over the past few years. At

the younger end of the spectrum, Mind Candy's Moshi Monsters, with its endearing characters and extended, tangible toy franchise, dominates the market. Mind Candy suggests that half of children in the UK are Moshi members, and Generation's research reveals that 59% of seven- to 10-year-olds who profess to social networking use the site. There are other sites—Disney's Club Penguin and Bin Weevils to name two—but it's the presence of Facebook across all age groups that is most telling.

Officially, Facebook is restricted for children under 13 and certainly wouldn't market itself as a kids site. Yet it is evident that even from the age of seven, children are clamoring to join the online community. We believe part of Facebook's appeal stems from the variety of games available on the site and the fact that gaming scores are published within the newsfeed, which appeals to kids' competitive natures. In addition, Facebook membership for a child under 13 carries credibility on the playground. Once a member, children enjoy expressing themselves by making use of the fan pages, and they are also displaying signs of consumer intelligence—41% reveal that they use their social networks to garner opinions before making a purchase.

Despite the technological advances in children's entertainment, the core elements that underpin childhood have not really changed. Children imitate adult behavior in play, hence the appeal of iPads and iPhones (arguably the ultimate grownup toy/gizmo). They also create fantasy worlds to build their understanding of the real world. While this is still achieved by playing dress-up, kids can now also explore thousands of different guises via social networking sites. Finally, they still love to settle down and watch an episode of *Tom and Jerry*, just as their parents and grandparents did. Although they now have the option to watch the show on line—and they just might Skype and tend to their Moshlings at the same time. \bullet

Dean Weller is the MD of London-based kids and youth media marketing specialist Generation Media. Weller is a lifelong "Toy Man" and has 25 years of media planning and buying experience, having previously worked at Grey Advertising, Mediacom and MindShare. For more information on Generation Media, call 44-207-255-4650 or visit www. generationmedia.co.uk.

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Gossip girls (and boys)

Nick finds that kids are just as engrossed by celebrity news—and the details of their everyday lives—as the rest of us



BY ERIN MILLER

here's no denying that we live in a celebrityobsessed culture. Everywhere we turn, whether
it's to TV, online or newsstands, we're surrounded by the latest gossip and news of the
lifestyles of the rich and famous. But are kids
as engaged and as interested in celebrities as
adults are? That's the very question we set out
to answer in this month's Kaleidoscope. Nickelodeon's
Digital Consumer Insights Group explored the role celebrity culture plays in kids' and teens' lives to better understand the ways kids like, expect and want to engage with
their favorite stars.

Most kids and teens ages eight to 17 take an interest in celebrity culture and like being informed on all aspects of their favorite celebrity's life. While girls are more likely to actively seek out information, almost all kids are curious to know more about their favorite stars. From fun facts to new projects, to what life is like being a star, all ages and genders eagerly look at pictures, watch videos and read up on celebrities of interest.

Among the many things they want to know—including how stars became famous and what they were like when they were younger—what piques kids' interest most are details of the everyday lives of their fave celebs. Kids and teens tend to gravitate towards celebrities who are relatable. And they are captivated by the aspects of celebrities' lives that are normal and regular. This behavior starts to dissolve as kids get older, with motivations becoming less about wanting to be like celebrities and more about entertainment and gossip.

In addition to being drawn to those stars who are potential role models, kids and teens pay attention to those who show appreciation for their fans. They clearly expressed wanting more access to their favorite stars and are seeking outlets to communicate with them directly. Hearing celebrities speak in their own words about their own lives and experiences is just another way kids are looking to get a sense of the real personalities of celebrities apart from their lofty status. Respondents in this study were very aware that oftentimes posts, tweets and even interviews don't come directly from the stars. Thus, the more authentic the source and information, the more appealing they are.

So, what are their main sources of celebrity info? Friends are the number-one source for the 10-and-under crowd. Celebrity talk and news are great drivers of social currency among this demographic. As girls approach their later tweens and teens, they increasingly turn to magazines and TV celebrity news programs to get the



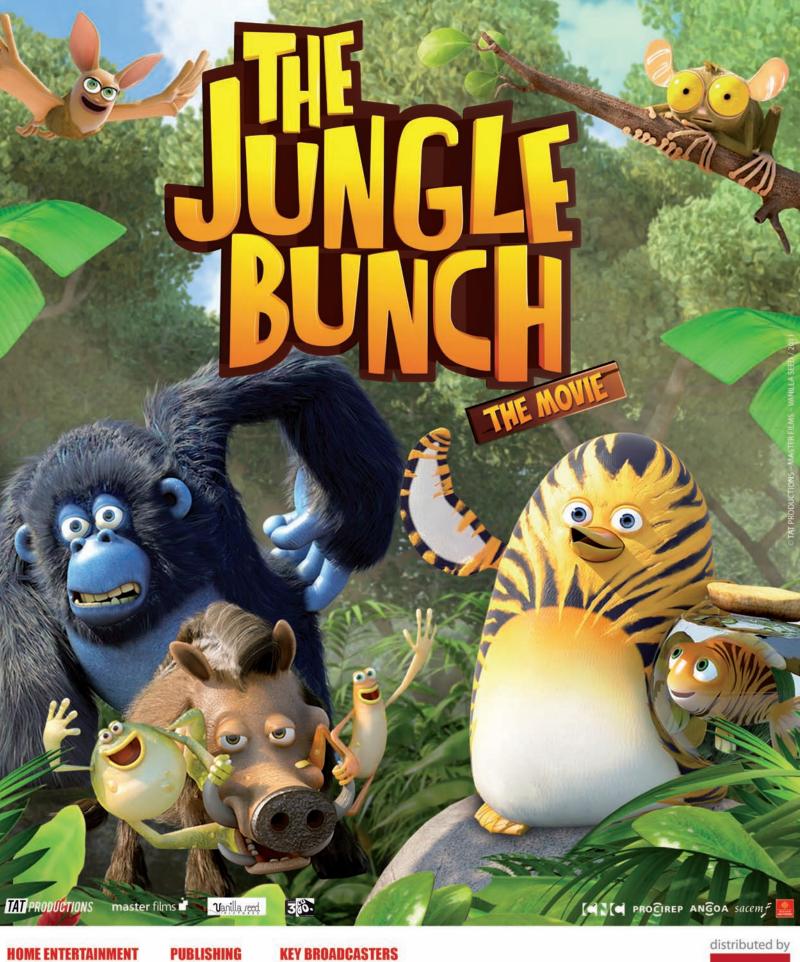
Kids love behind-thescenes shots like this one of the iCarly cast visiting a military base

latest scoop. While more traditional media is superserving this audience in the category, online sources shouldn't be ignored, as they're gaining ground quickly. In fact, kids and teens using social media are much more likely to turn to online sources for their celebrity information. Of the 66% of our respondents using Facebook, six in 10 use the social network to engage with celebrities. Although it's clear that more teens are using Facebook, in general, older tweens (11 to thirteen years old) are most likely to use Facebook to connect with celebrities. While this demographic is still not widely engaged with Twitter, those who do use it (32% of kids and teens) say that it's a good way to stay informed on their favorite stars. Platforms like Facebook meet the need for direct access and communication with celebrities, delivering on the notion of insider access that this age group desires. (3)

For more information, contact Kaleidoscope@nick.com

(Source: Nickelodeon Digital Consumer Insights. Qualitative Sample Size: six focus groups among 8- to 17-year-olds. Quantitative sample size: N=673 boys and girls, ages 8 to 17.)

In an effort to keep you in touch with our audience and give a voice to our consumers, the Brand and Consumer Insights Department at Nickelodeon Kids & Family has created Nickelodeon Kaleidescope. Every month, Kaleidescope will capture key areas of interst across the kid and family cultural landscape, provide an understanding of attitudes and behaviors and report on trends and buzz.







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Muse of the **Month**

Bailey thrives on stories of right vs.wrong

Like many of her peers, this eight-year-old has a keen moral compass



hether cheerleading or watching television, Bailey always roots for the good guys (and gals)! A spirited girl from a small, rural town in Tennessee, this eightyear-old is all about standing up and shaking her pom poms for what and who she believes is right. Bailey's clear conscience comes from the people closest to her. A true Southern girl, she's learned to play nice and expects others to do the same.

Sportsmanship is front and center for Bailey. When she succeeds in school or at her many extracurricular activities, she doesn't brag—that would be wrong. And don't get smart with her or her friends; Bailey told us, "The only people who can get smart with me are my mom and dad." Her respect for others and ability to speak up in defense of what's fair serve her well in her emerging social life, and it's also characteristic of kids her age.

For kids six-to-eight, there are often no shades of graythey're gaining a greater sense of how the world works, and have trouble rationalizing variations in the rules they have learned. This keen moral compass also plays a role in the media they choose to engage with. Kids like Bailey prefer unambiguous storylines in the content they consume (there's no question Harry must beat Voldemort), and clear rules in the games they play. Characters are good or evil; their choices are right or wrong. These clear lines help them to negotiate new experiences by grounding them in what they already know. And classic tales of underdogs and superheroes give these kids characters they can look up to and cheer for.

-Tiffany Aguilar and the team at Insight Kids

insight Insight Kids is a research-driven strategy firm that inspires its clients to build innovative and impactful experiences for kids and families.

For more information find us at www.insightkids.com and www.insightstrategygroup.com

Cool or Not? The competing comedies edition



Annoying Orange

	Boys 8 to 11 (199)	Girls 8 to 11 (197)	Boys 12 to 15 (178)	Girls 12 to 15 (167)		Boys 8 to 11 (237)	Girls 8 to 11 (247)	Boys 12 to 15 (230)	Girls 12 to 15 (239)
	49.7%	39.6%	24.2%	18.6%	Totally way cool *	28.3%	23.1%	25.2%	28.9%
۱	17.1%	14.7%	16.9%	10.8%	Very cool *	21.9%	19%	17%	20.9%
1	16.6%	19.3%	22.5%	27.5%	Kinda cool *	27%	33.2%	27.8%	27.6%
	7%	12.2%	16.3%	19.2%	Not cool *	11.8%	13%	13%	11.7%
	9.5%	14.2%	20.2%	24%	Totally un-cool *	11%	11.7%	17%	10.9%
	17.8%	21.2%	25.5%	30.7%	Don't know what it is	2.5%	1.2%	4.6%	0.8%



Phineas and Ferb

* Excludes "Don't know what it is" responses



 $Cool \, or \, Not? \, is \, part \, of \, KidSay's \, 2011 \, \textit{Year-End Treacker}. \, These \, one-of-a-kind \, research \, reports \, are \, published \, 10 \, times \, a \, year \, and \, provide \, a \, quantitative \, and \, qualitative picture \, and \, provide \, a \, quantitative \, and \, qualitative \, picture \, and \, provide \, a \, quantitative \, and \, qualitative \, picture \, quantitative \, and \, quantitative \, quanti$ of kids' likes, dislikes and trends gathered through in-school surveys with US kids ages five to 15. Contact Bob Reynolds (913-390-8110 or bob@kidsay.com).





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Private labels. Exclusives. Toys'R'Us is in hot pursuit to pad its bottom line and fend off the competition. How far can the retail specialist push this strategy before reaching its limits with suppliers and US consumers?

ith the prospect of an Initial Public Offering hanging over toy retailer Toys 'R' Us at a time when its sales remain stable but flat, the stakes for the company have arguably never been higher—and funding its global expansion in an effort to build value while fending off jabs from big-box retailers that deliver rock-bottom prices to consumers has never been tougher. It's fair to say that as the New Year dawns, all eyes in the industry are on the 64-year-old Wayne, New Jersey-based retailer that generates more than US\$13 billion in annual cales.

CEO of MGA Entertainment and a 30-year toy industry veteran. "If it isn't doing well, the whole business suffers—TRU is very important."

when major mass-market outlets in the US (read Walmart and Target), decided to dive into toy sales in a serious way in the mid-2000s, TRU started on its current path of evolution, shying away from relying solely on lower prices to drive traffic. While the big two can sell toys as loss leaders to drive sales in other areas of their traffic.

Bestseller My Keepon from UK-based Wow! Stuff was one of dozens of exclusives offered at TRU in Q4



specialty outlets like TRU. "You don't want to compete on price because it can kill you," says Richard Gottlieb, a toy industry insider and publisher of *The Global Toy Report*. As a result, the toy-centric retailer has shifted its focus away from competing on price to the aggressive pursuit of private labels and exclusives—signalled, in particular, by its appointment last year of toy manufacturing heavyweight and ex-Mattel exec Neil Friedman to the post of president of US operations.

Private-label push Friedman's move from manufacturer to retailer set the industry abuzz. It's not like he had much direct retail experience, but arguably few know more about marketing and building toy brands than he does. The injection of this marketing and manufacturing know-how—not to mention Friedman's deep connections within the entertainment licensing community—into TRU's top ranks was a clear indication of its strategy moving forward.

"When they introduced Neil, they also called him 'head of product development and global sourcing," says Gottlieb. "That sort of tells you all you need to know." He adds that in recruiting Friedman, TRU is seriously ramping up the private-label business it has been building over the past five years, with the aim of pushing these goods to the forefront of its more than 1,600 worldwide retail outlets. Further fuelling this perception is TRU's purchase of a 70% stake in Toy 'R' Us Asia's operations (100 stores across nine Asian markets) from manufacturing giant Li & Fung last fall. While the retail outlets are a major aspect of the deal, one can safely assume that the inroads made into the manufacturing hub of China will greatly assist TRU in its ability to source goods.

"It's a strategy that Toys 'R' Us has embraced with more fervor than anyone," says Lutz

Muller, founder and president of Klosters Trading Corporation, a retail consulting firm based in Williston Hills, Vermont. He explains that while the strategy was probably developed as far back as five years ago, what

US consumers saw this holiday season was the end-result of a carefully thought-out plan. TRU's 44-page holiday 2011 catalogue, for example, detailed the retailer's more than 30 exclusive and private-label brand offerings. The list continues to grow, as do the SKU numbers.

The history of TRU's reliance on private labels has given them a distinct advantage over their closest competitors in the area, say analysts.

"Because of Neil Friedman and their own factories, they have a built-in advantage over Walmart and Target in this area," contends Muller, adding that Friedman's personal contacts in China are an invaluable resource for TRU.

If a retail strategy relies on stocking shelves with private-label goods, some lessons from the past should be heeded, and according to the experts polled, TRU has learned them well.

"It isn't attempting to produce a cheaper version of products that are out there," says Gottlieb. "TRU's notion is not to go out and produce a crappy, cheap product. It has realized that it is more profitable to produce its own evergreens that give it a competitive advantage over Walmart and Target."

Gottlieb compares TRU's private-label strategy to food brand President's Choice, and says that the retailer's efforts are spent in creating "higher-perceived value" that places a heavy consideration on design.

Lynn Vantassel, director of retail insights at Cambridge, Massachusetts-based research firm Kantar Retail, agrees. "I'm finding that this follows what Target did with Archer Farms," she says. "TRU is trying to make these brands elite and upscale."

Gerrick Johnson, a BMO Capital Market analyst who tracks the toy industry, says that the retailer's efforts to create true brands on their own recalls efforts made by other retailers that have successfully built private-label brands not saddled with a lower-quality stigma. "I think the Holy Grail in private label is like what Sears has done with Kenmore," he says. "It has created brands that can stand alone and have their own reputations."

Margins 'R' Us Another interesting aspect of the strategy that indicates how much investment TRU has made in its own labels and products is the emergence of co-branding deals and direct-to-retail licensing deals.

There's the True Heroes line, for example. TRU's successful private brand mines the military action figure vein in the face of slowing G.I. Joe sales, and TRU introduced a



Toys'R'Us-43.6% Target-8.5% Walmart-4.3%

Source: Klosters Trading Corporation, Q42011

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co-branded line of playsets with Montreal-based toy manufacturer Mega Bloks this past fall. By co-branding with an established supplier and treating the SKUs as "exclusives," TRU elevated consumer perception of the private-label brand, further expanding upon its traditional definition and imbuing it with a pedigree.

"TRU is branding its higher-quality private-label goods and then calling them exclusive," says Kantar's Vantassel. "It has done that with the FAO Schwarz brand, for example, which makes sense for Toys 'R' Us because it also helps their margin, too."

On the direct-to-retail front, US broadcaster TLC's Animal Planet stands out. "We have had an Animal Planet DTR since 1999," says Debra Joester, founder and president of New

York-based licensing agency, The Joester Loria Group. "It continues to see double-digit growth year after year. TRU does the design and sources all the products—it has great experience and sourcing capabilities that really drive the program." More recently, the retailer has followed a similar path with its Home Depot line of toy tools and accessories licensed from the US-based home-improvement goods retailer.

Another obvious advantage of private label, and one that cannot be overlooked, is the bottom-line advantage of cutting out the middleman. These branded SKUs have the potential to be even more profitable than unbranded private-label or third-party licensed goods because of

their perceived pedigree and quality. Simply put, TRU does not have to offer discounts that consumers would expect to receive on unbranded goods because of the equity it's built in these exclusive brands. With the price differentiation playing less of a part, there's also no need for TRU to pass on private-label savings to the consumer.

And according to Muller, the use of high-value private labels has widened profit margins for TRU across the board. His research indicates that the combined price of the top 14 toys in all stores at the end of Q4 revealed that TRU actually enjoyed higher margins than its competitors. The sum of the top toys sat at US\$578 for TRU, while competitors Walmart and Target took in US\$502 for the same items.

"What this tells you is that with private labels and exclusives, Toys 'R' Us is able to sell regular toy brands at a higher price than anyone else," he says. "Essentially, if you get the

The Air Swimmer, one of TRU's hot new products

68 kidscreen February/March 2012

customer into the store via private labels and exclusives, you can get them to spend more money on other toys while they are there."

Partner pressure Given the potential payoffs associated with private-label business, TRU's suppliers would have reason to be concerned about getting squeezed out of licensing deals or losing large tracts of shelf space. But there are several factors at work preventing those things from happening entirely.

The % of US toy sales derived from exclusives

Toys 'R' Us – 15%

Target – 5%

Walmart – 5%

Source: Klosters Trading Corporation, Q4 2011

"There really is a delicate balance," says BMO's Johnson.

"As a retailer you really don't want to [alienate] the Spin Masters, Crayolas and Hasbros of the world."

A toy industry analyst at Needham & Company, Sean McGowan also notes that toy retailers often have leverage to ask for compensation if particular SKUs or products just don't sell as expected—an advantage that disappears the minute a retailer sources its own product.

"One of the sweet things about being a toy vendor is that when something doesn't sell well, you can beat up your supplier for markdown money," McGowan says. "I think you would be more hesitant to do that if the supplier is the guy in the office down the hall."

Joester mentions the same point, adding that the one major problem with developing and sourcing private-label goods is that "there is no one to send the markdown bill to."

Additionally, if the products don't sell, the retailers are left holding the bag completely since there are no other retail outlets—namely the deep discounters—that will carry proprietary labels belonging to another chain.

"It's bad enough as a retailer to have too much product, but it's even worse when it's something that you have sourced yourself," says Johnson. And while the gap might be closing, it is fair to say that toy retailers aren't as adept at marketing their products as toy manufacturers, which could leave valuable shelf space in a state of suspended animation.

Exclusive products For the same reasons that private label is becoming more important to TRU, so are exclusives. Muller's numbers (see sidebars on p. 66 and 68), in fact, indicate that the amount of valuable space the retailer is willing to dedicate to exclusives compared to its competitors.



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For the most recent holiday season, in fact, TRU sewed up exclusives for UK-based Wow! Stuff's mini toy My Keepon, as well as the manufacturer's Air Swimmers, The Trash Pack from Australia's Moose Toys, Mind Candy's Moshi Monsters and the Cars 2 wooden vehicle, licensed from Disney Consumer Products and manufactured by TRU.

Richard North, MD at Wow! Stuff, opted to give TRU a time-limited exclusive on the hyped toy and has been pleased with the result. "We had a number of meetings with major retailers," he says. "It's no secret that innovation and exclusives are key to TRU's competitive advantage …[They] moved lightning-fast, and together we were able to build a great program."

As North could tell you, TRU can offer toy manufacturers heavily trafficked areas in the store and robust promotions for exclusive retail rights.

"With My Keepon, after TRU got the exclusive, it made the toy one of its top 15 toys of the year," says Gottlieb. "With an exclusive like that, the retailer is going to make sure that it is promoted through its catalogue, and in-store, and in a way [its success] just becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy."

Exclusive risks Of course, no retail strategy comes with a guaranteed pay-off, and the elements of risk involved in setting up exclusives fall on both the manufacturer and the retailer.

Perhaps the biggest con associated with exclusives is that since every manufacturer views his bottom line as a function of shelf space and availability, limiting options in terms of retail outlets seems counter-intuitive—the potential upside has to outweigh the limiting of options. On a more technical level, managing and executing exclusive deals requires more man hours and resources than stocking everyday product.

"Some manufacturers view it as a headache," says McGowan, explaining that a lot of extra man-hours are spent on parsing out SKUs to their various exclusive retail homes.

Muller says that marketing exclusive products can create another hurdle. Although TRU can promote through its in-store and online channels, as it did with My Keepon, he believes the retailer's promotional efforts are not on par with those of a big toy company. "Toys 'R' Us is not quite as skilled at promoting items as Mattel and Hasbro," he says.

Additionally, there is always the risk of misjudging the market in terms of exclusives. For instance, with a hot property like Moshi Monsters, the exclusive line was initially greeted with enthusiasm by consumers. However, hot properties come and go, and rival retailers can use the exclusive period as a test-market of sorts for their potential product orders down the line.

Competitors can use perceived results of the exclusive to better gauge the interest of consumers and then place their orders accordingly. And if that first exclusive is a dud, they can avoid the IP and dead inventory altogether with no associated risks.

Limiting shelf space Experts are in agreement that there has to be a rational level of exclusives and private labels on retail shelves. While Vantassel reported that years ago she heard a toy retail executive claim he wanted to reach a 50% threshold with exclusive and private-label products, many now believe that number probably hovers around 30% at the high end. The reason, as any toy manufacturer and licensor is happy to tell you, is that traditional brands still hold the majority of consumer trust.

"If you are in the mass toy market, you need to have the toys that people want," says Gottlieb. "You are going to have to have the popular products."

"In the end, your seven-year-old is still going to want Star Wars and so on," notes Joester. "Private label is never going to replace that. It's just too hard to compete with something that has that TV and media push behind it."

Larian says he has seen similar pushes on private label before and expects to see them again. "The pendulum swings," he says, adding that he is very pleased with the direction that CEO Gerald Storch and Neil Friedman have taken with TRU. However, in a business that he says is "all about product design," he is not worried that private brands will start to eat away at MGA's bottom line. "They can do all the private brands they want," he says. "But they'll never have a brand like Lalaloopsy, Little Tykes or Bratz."



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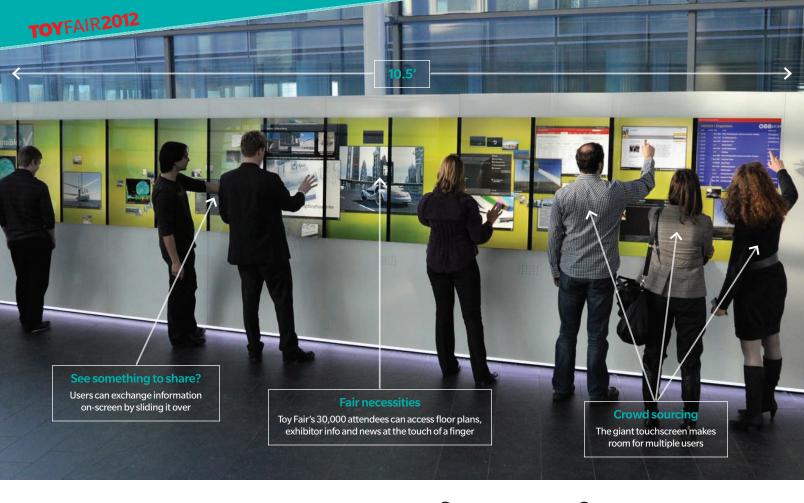
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An eye-catching display

Toy Fair amps up its tech quotient with a North American trade show first—a giant interactive info wall

BY GARY RUSAK

isitors attending the 109th American International Toy Fair in New York this month will have the opportunity to feast their eyes upon a North American technological first that could potentially become a standard fixture throughout the trade show world.

On the third floor of Toy Fair's home, the Javits Center, in the area known as the Crystal Palace, will sit a massive 10.5' x 4' digital display—the world's largest interactive digital wall that is sure to attract thousands of eyeballs and index fingers.

"It will immerse you in the show before you even get to the exhibition floor," says Kimberly Carcone, senior director of trade show and event marketing for the Toy Industry Association, the organization that hosts the Western Hemisphere's largest toy fair.

The initiative follows the TIA's stated goal of using technology to create a better show experience, one that is beyond what most would consider regular trade show fare.

"Over the past few years we have taken some strong steps in the technological realm," explains Carcone. "We launched a mobile app a few years ago and last year we had something called 'Play Happens' that melded the online and offline worlds using Foursquare technology. This year we wanted a new way to communicate the intricacies of the show to our attendees."

The TIA contracted Austrian technology design firm uma information technology, which, in partnership with Intel Corporation, developed the massive iPad-like display. "Touchscreen is so popular now," says Carcone. "It really has a cool factor, and this way the show information can be interacted with and shared."





Created at Academy Award-winning Weta Workshop in New Zealand, The WotWots, a pair of brother and sister aliens, have landed on Earth in their steam powered spaceship! In Season One they discover exotic creatures at the zoo. In the all-new Season Two, they mingle with friendly farm animals and discover wonderful sea creatures. The series celebrates the joy of discovery and the extraordinary diversity of life on Earth.











Building a new audience

With annual revenues up 105% since 2006, Lego looks to keep the growth going with Lego Friends. The toyco's first-ever girls line deconstructs play patterns to give them what they asked for—more color, character and detail.



here has long been debate within toy industry and consumer circles around "pink and blue" marketing, inevitably leading to nature versus nurture positing. Even kids wonder why pink is for girls and blue is for boys. Just ask YouTube sensation and preschool girl Riley, whose video rant (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-CU040Hqbas) had racked up 3.6 million views at press time.

While toy manufacturers and retailers are taking toddling steps towards gender equality (witness UK toy chain Hamley's recent move to axe its gender-specific aisles and signage), there's still a long road to go—and it's paved with criticism from consumer groups and activists. Take construction play, for example. It develops critical spatial, mathematical and fine motor skills, but has traditionally been a category dominated by boys—90% of boys play with Lego versus 9% of girls. Lego Systems set out to increase the number of girls who experience the positive benefits of con-

struction play in building its new Lego Friends collection. However, since the toy line's US debut at the beginning of last month, the company has fielded criticism from parents and experts who contend that Lego Friends is not as technical or challenging as the toyco's boy-centric products.

But the company stands by what it's learned from four years of global research and product testing among 3,500 girls and their mothers. Following a mix of anthropological research to understand motivations and expectations for play and ethnographic studies on the role of play and Lego play, the company conducted group and in-home studies to evaluate themes, models, colors, designs and characters. At-home play studies were conducted with toy models derived from the earlier studies, and then concluded with packaging and communications research.

Essentially, Lego built the Friends line by deconstructing play patterns, which tend to divide somewhat along gender lines. "It would have been CONTINUED ON PAGE 78

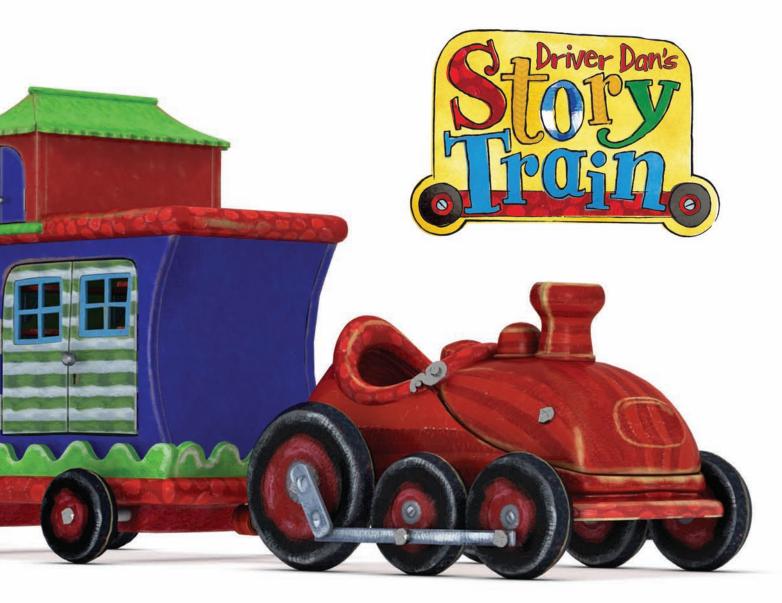
It's met with criticism from consumer groups, but Lego stands behind its new girls line, citing the four years' worth of research findings that went into its creation



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media & entertainment hub



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 72 \$\(\times\) "If I'm looking at something that I think you might find interesting, I can just slide it over to you," says Carcone. "It's more experiential than just staring at a wall; it's engaging and alive."

The device will be dubbed "Fair Necessities" at the show, and it has so far garnered almost as much buzz as some of the products set to be on display.

"The value of information is as tactile as it is cerebral," says Christian Doegle, CEO of uma. "[This] product combines world-class semantic technology with the latest multi-touch displays for a truly living product...The American International Toy Fair is the perfect venue for us to make our North American debut of this exciting technology."

While the organizers patiently await the installation of the wall, Carcone is confident that the technology will seamlessly fit into the show's aesthetic. "Everyone is excited," she says. "We know that when people come to Javits they come to do business, but we want them to have an experience that they just won't be able to have elsewhere. We deal in an industry of play, so we want to be as playful as we can with our tools."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 74 \Leftrightarrow far easier for us to add more female mini-figures to existing themes, but that's not what the girls told us would make a difference," says Michael McNally, brand relations director for Lego Systems. "We uncovered some very subtle but nuanced differences in the ways that boys and girls like to build and play, and we've incorporated those into the collection. For example, girls indicated that they wanted to see more detailed interiors in the structures they create, with more things to do and realistic situations that would prompt lots of story-telling and role-play. They also asked us for brighter colors and a different figure."

In the product testing phase, Lego asked groups of boys to build a castle set. When they had completed it, they were asked how they would play with it. The boys immediately went to the mini-figures, catapults, swords and horses and started to role-play a battle scene on the castle grounds. When asked what was going on in the castle (since they had spent so much time building it), they said it was really just the backdrop for the fantasy battle, and the resulting stories and play went on and on.

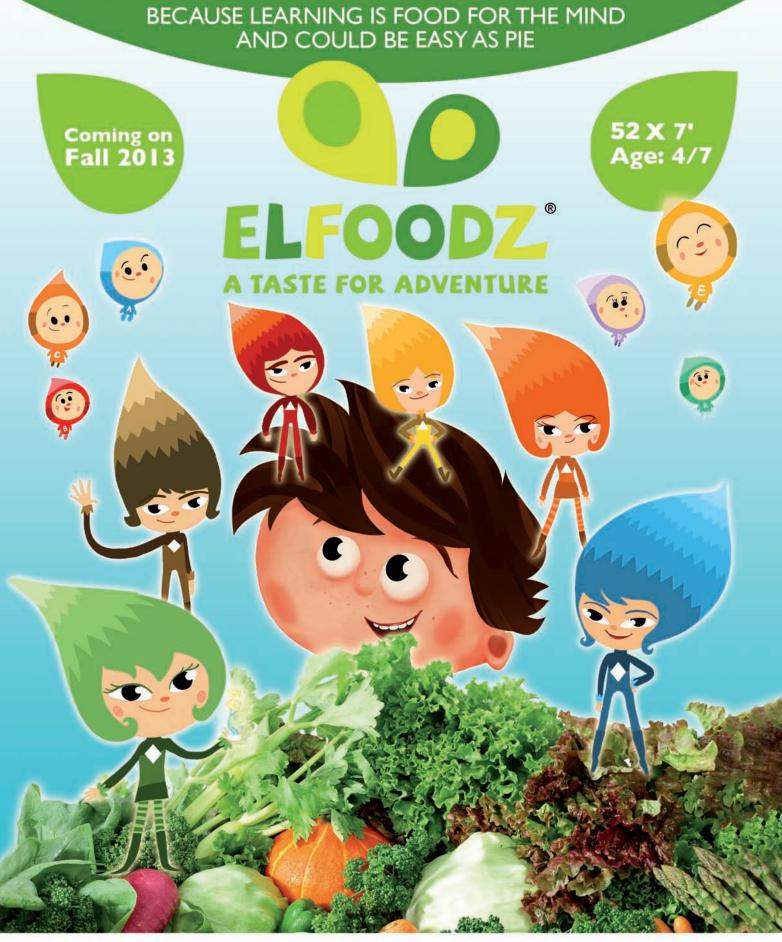
Groups of girls were then asked to build the same castle and explain how they would play with it. "They looked at everything, then inside of the castle, and asked us why there was nothing in the castle. The stories that the creation inspired were not very compelling for them, and the play didn't last very long," McNally recalls. "However, when we conducted play testing with some of the new Friends sets, the girls immediately identified with the environments, established different characters and personalities, and the storytelling and role-play was endless. The right models, details, realistic scenarios and figures made all the difference to their desire to build and play. One girl said 'I want to shrink down and be right there with them."

Listening to kids and building products based on their feedback has been the key to Lego's continued success, despite the global financial crisis and a shrinking toy market. Since 2006, the company's revenue has grown by 105%, and in 2010, sales were up 37.3% over 2009, with the US, UK, Russia and Eastern Europe the largest contributors to its growth.

On January 1, the Lego Friends collection launched in North America with 11 SKUs, including a beauty shop and café, and 12 more are expected to hit stores in the second half of the year. According to McNally, sales are already far outpacing company expectations, with favorable reviews on e-commerce sites and emails and calls from parents flooding in. "In particular, we have heard anecdotes that the girls are proud of themselves for completing models and will not stop playing with what they have built," he says. "We made what we heard them request—brighter colors, more details, more accessories, realistic play scenarios and more relatable figures, and we're thrilled to see so many more girls engaging in the construction play pattern."

Looking forward, we can expect to see online games, content and building inspiration, a mini-movie and consumer events constructed around the Lego Friends theme. Says McNally: "It's designed to be a core theme for us, and short- and long-term planning is in place for how the theme can evolve and grow."





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Running through 2014, here's a sneak peek at Hollywood's upcoming and their associated licensing and promo details. Sequels remain a mainstay on studio of hit toon franchises Despicable Me, Ice Age and Madagascar on deck.



(CGI) From producer Chris

Meledandri's Illumination

classic 1971 Dr. Seuss fable

about a forest creature, the

consequences of greed,

and the enduring power

Universal Pictures

of hope.

Entertainment comes

a CGI adaptation of the

March 2, 2012



THE PIRATES! **BAND OF MISFITS** March 30, 2012

(Stop motion/3D) The film tells the story of the luxuriantly bearded Pirate Captain, a somewhat lessthan-successful terror of the high seas. With his ragtag crew in tow, he goes on a quest from the exotic shores of Blood Island to the foggy streets of piratehating Victorian London to win a coveted Pirate of the Year award.

Aardman Animations/ Sony Pictures Animation/ Columbia Pictures

Gregory Economos, SVP of Sony Pictures Global Consumer Products, 310-244-4188, gregory_economos@ spe.sony.com

Mary Goss Robino, SVP of global marketing partnerships, Sony Pictures Consumer Marketing, 310-244-3999, mary robino@ spe.sony.com

Licensing and promo opps: Sony is exploring opportunities in select categories.



(L) The Avengers brings together for the first time the superhero team of Marvel Comics characters including Iron Man, Captain America, Thor and the Hulk, who are forced to band together to battle the biggest foe they've ever faced.

Marvel Studios/Buena Vista Pictures

Domestic: Paul Gitter, president of consumer products, North America, 212-576-4026, pgitter@marvel.com International: Sandrine de Raspide, EVP of Marvel Entertainment International, 44-207-858-2004, sderaspide@marvel.com

David Sieden, director of national promotions, Buena Vista Pictures Marketing, 818-560-4232, david.sieden@disney.com

Licensing and promo

opps: Marvel's Avengers Assemble licensing initiative is designed to develop long-term CP programs for its recent and upcoming Marvel superhero features that include this summer's multi-character The Avengers. Partners on-board include Hasbro (master toy), Hallmark, Huffy (bikes and scooters), Fruit of the Loom (briefs), Brown Shoe (footwear), P.S. from Aeropostale (apparel and accessories) and Lego (contruction toys).



kid-friendly feature films slates, with new editions

STUDIO & DISTRIBUTOR

Susan Brandt, president of licensing and marketing, Dr. Seuss Enterprises, 858-459-9744, susanb@drseuss.com

Michelle Hagen, VP & GM

of theatrical promotions, Universal Partnerships & Licensing, 818-777-8175 michelle.hagen@nbcuni.com

LICENSEES & PROMOTIONAL PARTNERS

Licensing and promo opps: Dr. Seuss Enterprises continues to roll out The Lorax's 365-day-ayear program.



BATTLESHIP May 18, 2012

MEN IN BLACK 3 May 25, 2012

SNOW WHITE AND

THE HUNTSMAN

June 1, 2012

June 8, 2012

MADAGASCAR 3

June 22, 2012

(L/3D) Peter Berg is producing and directing the action-adventure film based on Hasbro's classic naval combat game that unfolds across the seas, in the skies and over land.

(L) Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones return in the third installment of the sci-fi franchise.

(L) The new version of the fairtytale from Alice in Wonderland producer Joe Roth features Kristen Stewart as the only person in the land fairer than the evil queen (Charlize Theron), who is out to destroy her.

(CGI/3D) The third installment of the Madagascar franchise, and the first to be released in 3D, the film will see Alex the lion, Marty the zebra, Gloria the hippo, and Melman the giraffe still fighting to get home to the Big Apple. This time, the road takes them through Europe with a traveling circus.

(CGI) Princess Merida defies her parents by following her passion for archery, but she inadvertently jeopardizes her father's kingdom in the process. Set in the Highlands of Scotland, Brave sees the courageous Merida confront tradition, destiny and the fiercest of beasts.

STUDIO & DISTRIBUTOR

Universal Pictures

Sony Pictures/Columbia **Pictures**

Universal Pictures

DreamWorks Animation/ Paramount Pictures

Disney Pixar

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Brian Siegel, director of

franchise development,

Products, 818-544-0505,

brian.siegel@disney.com

Disney Consumer

Michelle Hagen, VP & GM of theatrical promotions, Universal Partnerships & Licensing, 818-777-8175, michelle.hagen@nbcuni.com

Licensing and promo

opps: Hasbro will natu-

rally be handling the toy

category, while Universal

is seeking promotional

partners.

Licensees: Jakks Pacific

(toys), Activision (video

Mary Goss Robino, SVP of

partnerships, Sony Pictures

mary robino@spe.sony.com

Consumer Marketing,

global marketing

310-244-3999,

games)

Licensing and promo opps: Product across

categories will launch up to six weeks prior to the film release at mass retail, department, specialty and online. Licensees on-board include Cardinal (games), High IntenCity (jewelry), Jerry Leigh (apparel), Little, Brown (publishing), Loungefly (accessories), MeadWestvaco (calendars), Pacific Solutions (prop replicas), Rubie's (costumes), Townley (HBA) and Trends International (stationery/social expressions).

Licensees: Dalmatian Press, Decopac, Disguise, Fisher-Price, Hallmark, iStorytime, Mattel, Penguin Books

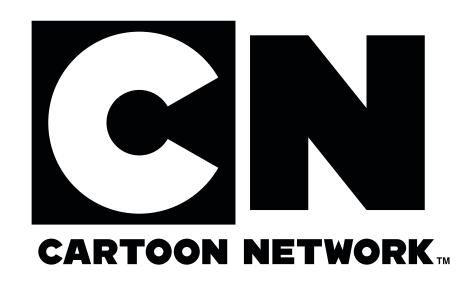
Licensing and promo opps: Theatrical and DVD promotional opportunities are available, and DreamWorks is seeking additional partners in select categories

Licensees: Mattel, CDI, Tolly Tots, Hallmark, World Trends, Townley Licensing and promo opps: Disney CP is on the lookout for partners in role-play, plush, apparel, accessories, home décor, stationery, food and beauty.

LICENSEES & PROMOTIONAL PARTNERS

82 kidscreen February/March 2012

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July 3, 2012

ICE AGE: CONTINENTAL DRIFT July 13, 2012

HOTEL T September 21, 2012 **FRANKENWEENIE** October 5, 2012

WRECK-IT RALPH November 2, 2012

(L) Director Marc Webb takes on the latest installment of the popular franchise. Andrew Garfield stars as Peter Parker/Spider-Man and Emma Stone portrays Gwen Stacy.

(3D) Ice Age's Manny, Diego and Sid embark on a new adventure after a cataclysm sets an entire continent adrift. Separated from the rest of the herd, they use an iceberg as a makeshift ship, which launches them on a seafaring quest.

(CGI) The infamous Prince of Darkness is also the owner of Hotel Transylvania, a luxurious "five-stake" resort where the world1s monsters get away from humans. Dracula also uses the hotel to protect his teenage daughter Mavis, who ends up meeting a curious young human named Jonathan.

(Stop motion/3D) From Tim Burton comes a new tale about a boy and his dog. After unexpectedly losing his beloved canine Sparky, young Victor harnesses the power of science to bring his best friend back to lifewith just a few minor adjustments.

(CGI) Wreck-It Ralph, voiced by John C. Reilly, is an arcade game villian who wants to prove he can be a good guy. To do so, he sneaks into a shooter game, taking the part of the hero. His goal is to win a medal, but he ends up accidentally unleashing a deadly enemy and has to become a real hero before it's Game Over for the entire arcade.

STUDIO & DISTRIBUTOR

Marvel Studios /Sony **Pictures**

Blue Sky/Twentieth Century Fox

Sony Pictures Animation/ Columbia Pictures

Walt Disney Pictures

Walt Disney Pictures/ Buena Vista Pictures

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LICENSEES & PROMOTIONAL PARTNERS

Licensing and promo opps: Spider-Man Merchandising is looking to assemble a roster of licensees across all categories.

Licensees: C&A (apparel), Carta Mundi (playing cards for Europe), Eurosales (arts and crafts), Panini (sticker albums) and The Promotions Factory (figures, playsets). Plush partners include Gipsy (France and Benelux), Kayford Holdings (Germany), Trudi Spa (Italy), Play by Play (Spain), Neco Dis Tic (Turkey) and AST (Russia).

Licensing and promo opps: Fox continues to seek partners across categories.

Licensing and promo opps: Sony is exploring opportunities in select categories.

Licensing and promo opps: Disney is looking for partners in apparel, accessories, home décor, collectibles, collector figures, stationery, beauty, pet costumes/toys and books.

Licensing/promo

opps: Disney has tapped Thinkway Toys as a key toy licensee and is looking for partners in apparel, home décor, party, confectionery, produce, beauty, social expressions and collectibles..



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- Santos Cordones



RISE OF THE GUARDIANS November 21, 2012

(CGI/3D) When an evil spirit known as Pitch lays down the gauntlet to take over the world, the immortal Guardians must join forces for the first time to protect the hopes, beliefs and imaginations of children all over the world.

STUDIO & DISTRIBUTOR DreamWorks Animation/ Paramount Pictures

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> dreamworks.com International: Sheila Clarke, head of international consumer products, retail and promotions, 818-695-7542, sheila.clarke@

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Linda Kehn, head of theatrical promotions, 818-695-7569; linda.kehn@ dreamworks.com David Bynder, head of home video promotions, 818-695-7031, david.bynder@

Licensees: Dalmatian Press, Decopac, Hallmark, iStorytime, Simon & Schuster

dreamworks.com

Licensing and promo opps: DreamWorks is seeking additional partners in select categories including gifts, collectibles, apparel and DVD.

THE CROODS March 22, 2013

(CGI/3D) The comedyadventure takes us back to the beginning—to a previously undiscovered era known as the Croodacious. A newcomer from the future helps the Croods family navigate its way into the bright tomorrow.

DreamWorks Animation/ Paramount Pictures

Domestic: Brad Woods. head of licensing and retail marketing, 818-695-7011, brad.woods@ dreamworks.com International: Sheila

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Licensees: Dalmatian Press, Decopac, Fisher-Price, iStorytime, Mattel, Simon & Schuster Licensing and promo opps: DreamWorks is seeking additional partners in select categories including gifts, collectibles,

apparel and DVD.

MONSTERS UNIVERSITY June 21, 2013

(CGI) This prequel to 2001's Monsters Inc. tells the story of Mike and Sulley's relationship during their days at the University of Fear, when they weren't necessarily the best of friends.

Disney Pixar/Buena Vista **Pictures**

Brian Siegel, director of franchise development, Disney Consumer Products, 818-544-0505, brian.siegel@disney.com

David Sieden, director of national promotions, Buena Vista Pictures Marketing, 818-560-4232, david.sieden@disney.com

Licensing/promo opps: Disney CP is looking for partners across all

categories.

DESPICABLE ME 2 July 3, 2013

(CGI) Gru, his girls and his vast army of minions return in Despicable Me 2, the follow-up to the blockbuster feature that grossed more than US\$540 million at worldwide box office.

Illumination Entertainment/Universal Pictures

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Michelle Hagen, VP & GM of theatrical promotions, Universal Partnerships & Licensing, 818-777-8175, michelle.hagen@nbcuni.com

ray.delarosa@nbcuni.com

Licensing and promo **opps:** Universal is seeking partners across categories and has signed on Thinkway Toys as master toy licensee to produce toys, figures, plush, dolls, playsets, vehicles, role-play and novelty items.

TURBO July 19, 2013

(CGI/3D) Turbo is the story of a snail with a dream of winning the Indy 500. When a freak accident gives him extraordinary speed, Turbo sets out to try to make his dream come true.

DreamWorks Animation/ Paramount Pictures

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Licensees: Decopac, Fisher-Price, Mattel, The Northwest Company Licensing and promo opps: DreamWorks is seeking additional partners in select categories including gifts, collectibles,

apparel and DVD.



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PHINEAS AND FERB July 26, 2013

SMURFS 2 August 2, 2013

MEAND MY SHADOW November 13, 2013

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON 2 June 20, 2014

AlsoSlated

OZ THE GREAT AND POWERFUL

March 8, 2013

(2D animation/live action) Step-brothers Phineas and Ferb, owners of a pet platypus who leads a double life as a secret agent fighting the evil Dr. Doofenshmirtz, will graduate from TV to the big screen with a dose of live action for the theatrical release.

(CGI) The Smurfs will continue their adventure in the modern world in the sequel to last summer's blockbuster that took home \$US35.6 million on its opening weekend.

(CGI/3D) The story centers around Shadow Stan, a frustrated shadow who yearns for a dynamic life, but is stuck with Stanley Grubb, the world's most boring human. But the excitement takes a turn when Shadow Stan breaks the rules and takes control of Stanley.

(CGI/3D) The sequel to the worldwide 2010 smash about Viking teen Hiccup and his fiercely protective dragon pal Toothless will feature an all-star voice talent roster including Jay Baruchel, Craig Ferguson, America Ferrera, Jonah Hill, Christopher Mintz-Plasse, TJ Miller and Kristen Wiig.

This 3D preguel to the classic tale explains the origin story of the wizard, played by James Franco, as a fledgling circus magician whose hot air balloon is transported to Oz. The young Hollywood cast also includes Mila Kunis as one of the witches who control Oz. Disney

STUDIO & DISTRIBUTOR

Walt Disney Pictures/ BuenaVista Pictures

Sony Pictures Animation/ Columbia Pictures

DreamWorks Animation

DreamWorks Animation

PERCY JACKSON: SEA OF MONSTERS March, 27, 2013

In the second installment following Percy Jackson and the Olympians, the son of Poseidon continues his epic journey to retrieve the Golden Fleece, which will save Camp Half-Blood, the home and training ground for his demigod posse.

20th Century Fox

TEENAGE MUTANT

The live-action adventure

based on the popular,

ninjas is currently in development.

Paramount Pictures

The plot has yet to be

released for the project,

which has been in devel-

opment at Warner Bros.

for the past three years. Casting is now underway

have a slick L&M program, built on their long-standing relationship producing toys and video games. Warner Bros.

sewer-dwelling, reptile

NINJA TURTLES

2014

LEGO

2014

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Linda Kehn, head of theatrical promotions, 818-695-7569; linda.kehn@ dreamworks.com David Bynder, head of home video promotions, 818-695-7031, david.bynder@ dreamworks.com

seeking licensing and pro-

motional partners across

all categories.

Domestic: Brad Woods, brad.woods@

International: Sheila Clarke, head of international consumer products, retail and promotions, 818-695-7542, sheila.clarke@

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Licensing and promo opps: DreamWorks is seeking licensing and promotional partners across all categories.

PROMOTIONS CONTACT

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Licensing/promo opps:

Disney has been working

to turn the property into

Since June 2010, DCP has

program, producing with

licensees more than 200

Phineas and Ferb items,

the theatrical release.

and it plans to add more for

revved up the IP's licensing

its next big franchise.

Mary Goss Robino, SVP of Global Marketing Partnerships, Sony Pictures Consumer Marketing, 310-244-3999, mary_robino@ spe.sony.com

Licensing and promo Licensing and promo **opps:** DreamWorks is

opps: Sony hasn't announced partners for Smurfs 2, but licensees for the first theatrical installment included lakks Pacific (figures, playsets, plush), Build-A-Bear Workshop (plush), Beeline (mobile app), Ubisoft (games) and Simon & Schuster (movie novel).

head of licensing and retail marketing, 818-695-7011, dreamworks.com

dreamworks.com

theatrical promotions, 818dreamworks.com

> for the family-targeted, live-action/animated hybrid, which will star actors in a LEGO world. Australia's Animal Logic (Happy Feet, Legend of the Guardians) has been tapped to produce the animation, which is expected to comprise 80% of the film. Warner Bros. and LEGO will undoubtably

LICENSEES & PROMOTIONAL PARTNERS

88 kidscreen February/March 2012



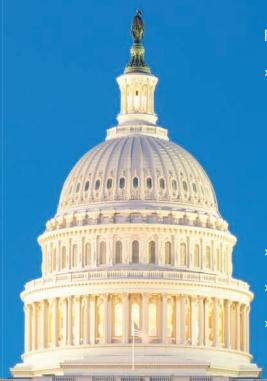
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PLUS...

PLAYCON REGISTRANTS ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL OF THE **DC FLY-IN** ACTIVITIES AS WELL!

THE PLAYCON 2012 PLANNING COMMITTEE WANTS TO SEE YOU THERE, SO CONTACT ANY OF US IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS!

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GAYLORD NATIONAL HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER ON THE POTOMAC RIVER AT NATIONAL HARBOR



Every hedge fund in Christendom would love to know that. I went from divas to dinosaurs. Very well, Christmas will come on December 25th once again this year. Batman is Batman at the end of the day. how will i do my

- homework without wikipedia like seriously.
- Klosters Trading Corporation's **Lutz Muller** responds to a query about when Toys 'R' Us's Initial Public Offering might finally occur
- National Geographic EVP **Melina Bellows** talks about her path from celebrity profile writer to editor of Nat Geo Kids magazine
- CEO Isaac Larian predicts toyco MGA Entertainment's holiday season performance
- **Bruno Schwobthaler** on how his company, Warner Bros. Consumer Products, has dealt with reaching different demos for the Dark Knight
- A tweet from a **tween on Buzzfeed.com** whose homework efforts suffered at the hands of Wikipedia's recent SOPA protest







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